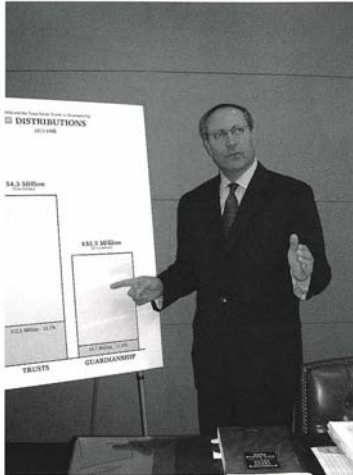


The University of Memphis – Herff Highlights, Fall 2006



Samuel J. Blustein refers to a trial exhibit during a recent hearing at court.

An engineering education and the logical processing it develops also has been a key factor in the career of **Samuel J. Blustein** (BSEE '75), a successful Houston lawyer. Currently a partner with Hirsch & Westheimer, P.C., he built his early career on patent and other intellectual property work. But it NASA program and his early proficiency in math and science that first drew him to Herff, where he studied electrical engineering and worked nights as an Air Pollution Control Technician.

"At the end of my junior year I got the bug to go to law school," he recalls. He had been accepted at the U of M law school, but during a trip to Houston to visit family, he fell in love with the city and decided to stay. As he pursued his law degree at the University of Houston in the evenings, he worked at Brown & Root Engineering during the day to support himself.

He got his law degree in 1980, and traded his engineering post for the law. Blustein began helping clients prepare and file the necessary paperwork for obtaining patents. His other area of practice was assisting on lawsuits to help protect clients' patents, known as patent infringement lawsuits. One of his most visible, early cases was working on a patent infringement lawsuit for the inventor of the mechanical bull that was used at Gilley's Bar in Pasadena, Texas. This "bucking bronco" ride was made famous by the 1980 movie "Urban Cowboy."

Blustein found that his engineering degree was invaluable to understanding the intricacies of his clients' inventions. Since then, Blustein's law practice has diversified considerably to include many areas of business and family law. While he still does some advising in patent and intellectual property-related areas, his focus nowadays is general business and family law litigation. But his engineering background continues to be an asset.

An education in engineering provides you with the skills to be very organized, logical in your approach, and detail oriented. Those three things have served me well for my clients.

He credits his education at Herff for his ability to remember the myriad of details that a good litigator must have at his "mental" fingertips at trial. "The ability to draw upon your memory is very important in representing your client. Court cases always go through twists and turns, so you have to be able to shift gears at a moment's notice."