

MINNESOTA LAWYER ATTORNEYS OF THE YEAR 2010



CRAIG KRUMMEN

WINTHROP & WEINSTINE

Maybe it's because Craig Krumpfen, shareholder at Minneapolis-based Winthrop & Weinstine, grew up in a small farming town that he has such a passion for representing underdogs against big corporations.

Examples of his cases include successfully representing Rottlund Homes last year in a \$32 million copyright infringement lawsuit against a larger, national corporation; representing startup company Inspired Technologies against a big, publicly traded tape manufacturing company and being awarded \$13.15 million in damages; and representing Marvin Windows, based in the small town of Warroad, Minn., in a trial that won in excess of \$150 million.

Also, in a pro bono case, Krumpfen successfully represented a young man with diabetes and a hearing disability against wrongful hiring discrimination practices.

"It's all about setting injustices straight," he said. "To me, that's what's appealing about litigation work."

After graduating from the University of Iowa College of Law, Krumpfen joined Winthrop & Weinstine, focusing on intellectual property and complex commercial litigation. He tried his first jury trial one year after obtaining his license to practice law,

and throughout the years represented high-profile clients in some demanding cases.

"The Marvin Windows case was grueling," he said. "We were in the war room by 6 a.m. and wouldn't leave until midnight and that went on for months. We were interviewing people during all shifts."

Shortly after that case ended, Marvin Windows asked Krumpfen to serve in-house as a vice president. He rejoined Winthrop & Weinstine two years later.

At just 42, Krumpfen has been on a career fast track and admits some lawyers struggle under the strain.

"There's an amazing amount of pressure, but I'm grounded in faith and family," he said. "Without it, you become unbalanced." He and his wife Jill have four young children.

In addition to his busy litigation practice, Krumpfen finds time to mentor. His most recent law student mentee graduated from the University of Minnesota College of Law and landed a job at a prestigious Chicago firm. "That, too, is rewarding," he said.

—Liz Wolf