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LEGAL

CHARLENE MORROW

*Partner***Fenwick & West LLP****Age:** 56**I am the first:** In my family to get an advanced degree

In addition to her persistence and her expertise in matters relating to patent litigation, Charlene Morrow credits a bit of timing and geography for her distinction as a pioneer of sorts when it comes to female lead litigators.

“I was able to break through because of Fenwick’s representation of startups,” Morrow said of her quarter-century ascension at Mountain View-based Fenwick & West. “I put on witnesses at trial when I was a mid-level associate, and after that was able to take the lead.”

The Southern California native and U.C. Berkeley Boalt Hall graduate, who also does pro bono work for veterans, has represented clients ranging from startups to Fortune 500 companies in the IT and life sciences fields, where intellectual property and contract disputes are a common theme.

Despite her achievements, Morrow believes there is still work to be done when it comes to promoting women litigators. “There are too few female trial lawyers in my field,” she said. “I’m often in large defense groups and the only female lead.”

My career path was set by: “Winning a case via a motion I worked on during my first summer after law school convinced me I might like private practice.”

Advice you would give your 18-year-old self: “When the math teacher won’t answer your questions after class, don’t give up.”