

# St. Louis lawyer displays an inner drive to succeed

By Brian Cox



Growing up in St. Louis, attorney Brayden Sternklar dedicated untold hours to playing hockey, and the experience taught him two valuable lessons that he has applied to his legal practice.

The first is simple: “Work hard.”

The second is more demanding: “Work when others aren’t working.”

“I’m very driven to succeed,” says Sternklar, who focuses his practice on advising businesses from formation and growth, to restructuring and recovery, with a particular emphasis on the trucking and transportation industry.

That drive has defined much of Sternklar’s life, from the hockey rinks in St. Louis to courtrooms and conference rooms all across the “Gateway to the West.” Born in Montreal in 1996, Sternklar moved with his family to St. Louis when he was 5 years old after his father’s job in furniture manufacturing brought the family south. He has remained tied to the city ever since, building both his career and his family life there.

As a child, hockey became the center of his world. He began playing at 6 years old and spent 17 years in the sport, primarily as a left wing on competitive travel teams. The game demanded constant travel, discipline, and resilience. It also taught him how to handle adversity long before he became a lawyer at Roberts Perryman.

Sternklar says he wanted to become a lawyer “pretty much as long as I could remember,” tracing the ambition back to a mock trial exercise in fifth grade known as the “bubblegum trial.” Cast as defense counsel during the exercise at the historic Old Courthouse in downtown St. Louis, Sternklar successfully persuaded the jury to side with his client.

“After the jury found for my client and I won, I wanted to be a lawyer ever since,” he says.

Despite having no lawyers in his family, Sternklar pursued the path steadily. After graduating in 2018 from Bradley University in Illinois with a degree in business administration, he enrolled at Drake University Law School in Iowa, attracted by the school’s strong bar passage and job placement rates.

The transition to law school proved intimidating at first. Sternklar still remembers orientation week, when U.S. Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch addressed incoming students and faculty emphasized the rigor awaiting them.

“I thought, man, I got to drop out,” Sternklar says with a laugh. “I don’t even know what I’m doing here.”

Instead, he applied what he learned on the ice about the value of work to his studies and excelled.

At Drake, Sternklar graduated cum laude, made the Dean’s List every semester and served as production editor for the Drake Journal of Agricultural Law. He also clerked for Chief Judge William P. Kelly in Iowa’s Fifth Judicial District, an experience that gave him a rare opportunity to observe litigation from the bench before practicing it himself.

During his clerkship, he watched cases unfold from beginning to end and gained firsthand exposure to “what motion practice looks like” while learning how judges evaluate arguments, preparation, and credibility.

More importantly, Sternklar says law school helped him develop the discipline that now defines his approach to practice.

“By the time I got to law school, I was like, ‘all right, this is going to be my career,’” he says.

He returned to St. Louis after graduation in 2021. In April 2022, Sternklar accepted a position at Roberts Perryman P.C.

The firm’s culture fits naturally with a longstanding focus on trucking litigation, transportation law, insurance defense and related industries. For decades, Roberts Perryman has represented trucking companies, employers, and insurers while building a reputation for practical, efficient representation and deep industry knowledge.

Sternklar has become an increasingly important part of that work.

While the firm’s roots are in accident litigation, Sternklar says Roberts Perryman has expanded into broader service as outside counsel for trucking companies. His practice now includes contract review, employment issues, cargo claims, mergers and acquisitions, debt restructuring, and litigation management.

“You name it, I’ve probably done it at this point,” he says.

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His growing involvement in transportation law has also led to national speaking opportunities. Sternklar recently presented at Primerus' Transportation Defense Institute conference in Savannah, Ga. on the use of trucking telematics in litigation, an increasingly important issue involving electronic logging devices and driver data.

The subject reflects Sternklar's natural inclination toward detail-oriented analysis.

"I'm good at digging into things and finding the small details in the case to really focus on," says Sternklar. "It's always kind of been my strong suit."

Sternklar and his wife, Amber – whom he has known since third grade – married in 2024 and welcomed their son, Hudson, the following year. The couple enjoys trying new restaurants around St. Louis, while Sternklar still finds time for playing golf, watching football, and listening to music.

Over time, Sternklar says he has come to understand that success often comes not from dramatic courtroom victories, but from securing the best possible outcomes for clients facing difficult circumstances.

"The wins are making sure the client is happy and getting the best result possible," he says. "I treat every case and client like it's the most important one I have."

Today, Sternklar approaches every matter with the same mindset he developed years earlier on the hockey rink: Preparation and consistency are keys to success, of course, but always being willing to outwork the field is pivotal.