



### MEMBER PROFILE QUESTIONS

#### INTRO :

**Member Name :** Amanda Komljenovic

**Year of Call :** 2021

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#### QUESTIONS :

**1- How did you get into criminal law?**

I was always interested in criminal justice policy throughout school, which led me to law school. I gravitated towards criminal law with that background in mind after getting a Master's degree in criminal justice policy.

**2- What type of cases do you enjoy defending the most and why?**

I enjoy representing clients who have addiction and mental health issues. I always found that background interesting from a policy perspective and find that there are glaring gaps in the way that our system in Canada addresses accused who suffer from mental health and addiction issues. I think it's important for those individuals to have counsel who can help them navigate and understand the system and connect them to resources.

**3- How did the practice of criminal law change you?**

Practicing criminal law, and defence in particular, made me become more passionate about the social aspects of client work. A huge aspect of criminal defence involves caring about the social needs of your client, like housing, mental health care, and access to affordable services in the community. It really helped me understand the responsibility that comes along with the practice beyond just working on black letter law every day.

**4- If there is one thing only you would like to see change in criminal law, what would it be?**

I'd like to see Crown Attorney's become more compassionate and patient, and the system in general become more cognizant of the holistic issues that those who come in contact with the system face. I think we have a chance as criminal lawyers, both Crown and defence, to help accused who come in contact with the system to ensure accused persons don't come back into contact with the system after they access our services. In a perfect world, I'd like to see that change.

**5- What advice would you give to your younger self when you first started practising criminal law?**

This is hard, because I just started practicing! I think I would tell myself to trust the process, and that as hard as it can be to be new at the profession, learning takes time.

### **6- How do you deal with bad work days?**

I try to tell myself that it is okay to unplug and take a break when I need to (which is SO hard!!). Self-care is super important, and it can be really hard to do that as a new call. We have a mentality that we should always be putting in a certain number of hours of work, but I think it's okay to take a break if we can.

### **7- What do you think of Zoom court?**

I think it's awesome that courts have modernized and become equipped with technology that allow us to appear remotely. I do miss in person appearances sometimes.

### **8- Any embarrassing court story you're willing to share?**

Last month I went to an in-person trial at Old City Hall with two different high heels...I had to wear my winter boots with my suit...

### **9- Who is your role model/inspiration in criminal law?**

Definitely my law school and Master's criminal law professors. I can't just pick one. They've taught me everything I know about criminal law and made me as passionate as I am today. I owe that to them.

**10- What's your favourite song?**

I don't think I just have one...but I really like country music.

**11- How do you maintain work life balance and how do you deal with the stress of the job?**

I'm still trying to figure this out. I force myself to take one day on the weekend off where I don't look at my work phone or emails if I don't have to.

**12- What is your biggest legal inspiration?**

Surrounding myself with so many strong, female role models every day in the legal community is a very big inspiration to me.

**13- What do you do outside of the law?**

I've just gotten into journaling! I love biking in the summer and hiking in the winter.

**14- What would your defence bar colleagues be surprised to learn about you?**

I'm a huge baseball fan. I've been to 11 ballparks in the U.S.! (My favourite was the old Turner Field in Atlanta)