

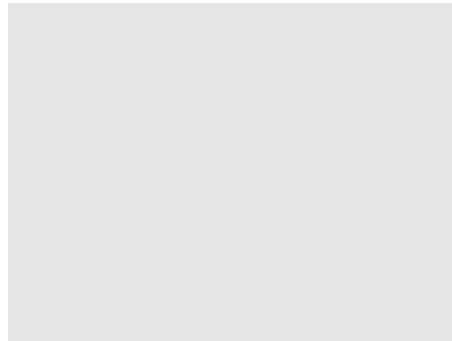
[https://www.clevelandjewishnews.com/features/special\\_sections/local\\_lawyers\\_super\\_attorneys/profiles/deana-stein-benesch-friedlander-coplan-aronoff-llp/article\\_a8abc31c-7f90-11ec-ba3e-df563813d01f.html](https://www.clevelandjewishnews.com/features/special_sections/local_lawyers_super_attorneys/profiles/deana-stein-benesch-friedlander-coplan-aronoff-llp/article_a8abc31c-7f90-11ec-ba3e-df563813d01f.html)

## Deana Stein / Benesch, Friedlander, Coplan & Aronoff LLP

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Deana Stein

Before becoming an attorney, Deana Stein was pursuing an entertainment career. It wasn't until she took a few pre-law classes her senior year at Boston University that she realized she loved studying law.

"I had some time to explore some non-music classes," she said. "It wasn't something that I had thought about much before that. When I was applying for jobs out of college, I didn't have any experience. I had a degree in music. I just needed to apply to anything."

From there, Stein said she landed a job as a paralegal at a personal injury firm in New York.

An advertisement for HunterDouglas Sonnette Cellular Roller Shades. The top half features a photograph of a window with white cellular roller shades partially open, allowing light to filter through. In the foreground, there is a desk with a white lamp, a vase of flowers, and some papers. A small blue 'X' icon is in the top right corner of the photo. Below the photo, the text reads: "A Fresh Take on Roller Shades" followed by "Sonnette™ Cellular Roller Shades gently diffuse natural light to create a soft glow at the window." Below this text is an orange button with the words "LEARN MORE" in white. At the bottom of the ad, there are two logos: on the left, the logo for DA (Deana Aronoff) with the text "Benesch, Friedlander, Coplan &amp; Aronoff LLP" and "HesterDouglas + Gallery" below it; on the right, the HunterDouglas logo, which consists of an orange circle with a white cross inside, and the words "HunterDouglas" below it.

“I thought that if I am not turned off by the practice of law after being a paralegal, then maybe the next step is law school.”

Now, Stein is an associate at Benesch, Friedlander, Coplan & Aronoff LLP in Cleveland, where she focuses her practice on complex commercial litigation.

**CJN: How did you get into your practice area?**

**Stein:** I fell into litigation more than any other particular area. Some of that comes from the work you get as a law student at summer associate jobs. I interned for a state court judge and had a mini clerkship for a federal court judge. Those types of positions are very litigation-specific. But for me, it was also my background as a performer. When you're a litigator, that can come in handy. You need to be comfortable speaking publicly, arguing in front of a judge and being able to think on your feet. These are all things you learn as a performer.

**CJN: What is your favorite part about your job?**

**Stein:** In the past few years, I've found a lot of satisfaction coming up with creative solutions for client problems. Rather than just saying “well, this is simple” or “this is not simple,” I've found ways to help clients by deep diving into possible solutions.

**CJN: What are the biggest challenges in your field?**

**Stein:** It's not specific to my field, but I would say work-life balance. That's the case in so many fields right now. My firm has been great about working remotely. But when your home is your office, it's sometimes hard to find that divide. I also have two very young children.

## **CJN: How does Judaism influence your work?**

**Stein:** There is a great connection between Judaism and practicing law. Judaism is all about asking questions and considering different hypothetical situations to arrive at the right outcome. That is a lot of what practicing law is. What are the fact patterns? What are the questions that are arising? I spend so much time trying to ask the right questions to get the right result. That's a very Jewish thing.

## **CJN: What advice would you give to an aspiring attorney?**

**Stein:** It's hard to know what an attorney does before you become one. If possible, try to work at a law office or court in a non-legal capacity. It will give you a sense of how the law is practiced, what's involved and what all the pieces that come together are. It's very different from the fun end product you see on TV and movies where lawyers are in court arguing and arriving at their "aha" moments.

### About Deana

**Age:** 35

**Hometown:** Beachwood

**Undergraduate school:** Boston University

**Law school:** Benjamin Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University

**First paying job:** High Holy Day synagogue choir member and soloist

**What do you do to relax:** Get outside, with or without my kids and baking desserts

**If I weren't an attorney:** Actor or opera singer

**Best advice you ever received:** When it comes to taking on work that you're not really sure you're able to do in terms of time commitments, I was advised that they probably won't remember you said no, but they will 100% remember if you say yes to something and do it really badly because you didn't have time.

**Next Cleveland sports championship:** Guardians

**Must-watch TV:** "Grey's Anatomy"

**Favorite Northeast Ohio restaurant:** Luigi's

Local Lawyers / Super Attorneys 2022

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Becky Raspe