

Rising Star: King & Spalding's Jacqueline Seidel

Law360 (August 10, 2018, 1:10 PM EDT) -- King & Spalding's Jacqueline Seidel is skilled at guiding clients through resolving complex litigation, such as representing Toyota in unintended acceleration cases, landing her on Law360's list of one of five product liability attorneys under 40 recognized as Rising Stars.

HER MOST CHALLENGING CASE:

Representing Toyota in unintended acceleration cases has been the most challenging case for Seidel so far, as it involved a number of different facets to the matter, such as investigations, product liability suits and economic loss class actions.

"It was really a challenge to get my arms around the technology, but a challenge in a good way," Seidel said.

At the time, it was one of the largest class action settlements in the automotive industry, Seidel said.

"To be able to wrap up and develop a program through the courts that effectively stayed the litigation and resolved almost 95, 96 percent of product liability lawsuits, that was a challenge and also one of my proudest moments," Seidel said.

Generally speaking, Seidel said she takes pride in being able to bring closure to clients facing complex litigation matters.

While she is focused on automotive matters now, Seidel has also worked on hernia patch litigation for C.R. Bard and was involved in

RISING ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ STAR



Jacqueline Seidel
King & Spalding

Age: 39

Home base: New York

Position: Partner

Law school: Yeshiva University's Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law

First job after law school: Associate at Mound Cotton Wollan & Greengrass LLP

creating a settlement process that resulted in the settlement and dismissal of more than 90 percent of the personal injury cases against the company and the subsequent closure of the multidistrict litigation in Rhode Island in September.

WHY SHE CHOSE PRODUCT LIABILITY:

Seidel started off working in insurance and reinsurance defense when she was first out of law school as an associate at Mound Cotton Wollan & Greengrass LLP, then branched out into product liability at Reed Smith LLP, her firm prior to King & Spalding.

“I’m really interested in learning about different products and how things work,” Seidel said. “No day is the same for me anymore, and I like the challenge.”

With product liability, there’s always new set of facts and new set of allegations and being able to delve into those issues really attracted her to the space, she said.

“When you like something, you tend to excel at it,” Seidel said.

ON BEING A YOUNGER ATTORNEY:

Now 39, Seidel said that she hasn’t found that that her younger age has worked against her.

“I think sometimes people tend to find being a woman is also problematic in the industry, but I don’t find that all,” Seidel said. “Everyone nowadays is attuned the fact that women can be just as intelligent and just as much as a go-getter as men can be, and I’ve been lucky to work for and against attorneys who embrace that “

WHY SHE BECAME AN ATTORNEY:

Seidel said she grew up in Hong Kong, where her parents were friends with attorneys, many of whom she is still in touch with as an adult.

“I respected how they were able to portray and respect their opinions,” Seidel said.

“I pretty much as a child already somehow knew that I wanted to be a lawyer, though probably the reasons were a little less legitimate as a 10 or 11-year-old,” Seidel said.

While her path never changed, as she grew older she found satisfaction in being able to advocate for her clients and to craft arguments and positions that brought them closure, as well as writing motions and strategy pieces, she said.

“Pretty much what I do these days is to work hand in hand with in-house counsel to fashion strategic solutions, and being able to help them through the process ... all of that really speaks to my skill set,” Seidel said.

ADVICE FOR YOUNGER ATTORNEYS:

Seidel said that, for anyone trying to find a career path, the most important thing is to find what you’re passionate about, and the rest will follow.

“It’s very much up to the person, but maybe trying out different things at the outset of one’s professional career, unless you’re clearly set on a specific practice, that’s the best way to figure out what you really enjoy,” Seidel said.

— *As told to Emily Field*

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2018 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,200 submissions. This interview has been edited and condensed.