



BRUCE R. BENNETT/Staff Photographer

Gary Lesser, 36, appears in his Palm Beach office. The Palm Beach Gardens father of two followed his grandfather and father into the law. He also devotes time to helping Jewish causes and area schools.

MOVING UP

Gary Lesser

Managing partner, Lesser, Lesser, Landy & Greene

Distinction: Joining the team of Challenging the Future, a program that supports underfunded public schools.

Place of business: Palm Beach.

Recent accomplishments: Career planning was never a question for Gary Lesser. He knew when he was 8 he wanted to become an attorney.

"I wanted to practice law with my grandfather (Joseph Lesser)," the West Palm Beach native and third-generation lawyer said. "I would see him twice a week. He lived a mile away. He was my role model and a gentleman. He was such a sincere, warm person who wanted to help people. That's what I thought lawyers did. I still do."

And while he can help people through the practice of law, Lesser finds other ways to lend a hand in the community.

He has served as the chairman of the attorneys division of the Jewish Federation, president of the federation's young leadership division and chairman of the Rabin Society. He was legal vice president of the Jewish Community Day School and has just been nominated to return to the board of directors of the school, now known as the Meyer Jewish Academy.

Lesser received the Young Leadership Award from the Jewish Federation

and the Israel Unity Award from State of Israel Bonds, and he recently became an Eagle Member of the Academy of Florida Trial Lawyers.

Most recently, he became part of a team heading a program called Challenging the Future, which supports underfunded public schools. The program includes classroom mentoring, tutoring, charitable giving, field trips, classroom projects and academic achievement encouragement parties for families.

U.B. Kinsey School of the Arts/Palmview Elementary School is the first recipient of the Challenging the Future program.

Attorneys and staff from Lesser's firm — Lesser, Lesser, Landy & Greene — will be tutoring and mentoring in the classroom and contributing financial support for special events and field trips.

Restaurant purveyor Cheney Brothers Inc. will be providing food and other items to support the students at regularly scheduled Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test parties. The fourth- and fifth-grade students, directed by NozNewz Communications LLC, Target Media Group Inc. and Ko-Mar Video Productions, will be producing their own public service announcements for radio and television broadcast, holding news conferences and inviting the news media to follow their progress throughout the year.

Media partners include WRMF-FM 97.9 and WPBF-Channel 25, the local ABC affiliate.

Lesser believes in looking for the good in life and credits his mother, Stacie Brenner, for helping shape his optimism. And working with his father, Shepard Lesser, has been a great experience, he adds.

"It's made me a better person and a better lawyer."

Gary Lesser is his firm's managing partner and concentrates his practice in personal injury law. He is chairman of the professional ethics committee for the Florida Bar, a position he cherishes.

"Ethics is the core of the practice of law," he said.

Education: B.A., international affairs, George Washington University, 1989; J.D., University of Miami, 1992.

Age: 36.

Personal: Married to Jennifer. They live in Palm Beach Gardens with their daughters, Lillian, 6, and Josie, 3.

Hobbies: Playing tennis and reading history.

Career highlight: "A case (on which) I was co-counsel with (Miami lawyer) Tod Aronovitz, immediate past president of the Florida Bar. He brought me into a case where an Atlanta Braves replacement pitcher was killed near the hotel where he was staying. We represented the pitcher's family. We fought tooth and nail, and two weeks into the trial they (the insurance company) said, 'We want to settle.' We fought and won with this very meritorious case for a lovely family that had suffered a loss."

Favorite quote: "Every gray cloud has a silver lining."

—Mary Thurwachter