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## “I knew I wanted to be involved”

Abbe Fletman left journalistic objectivity to take sides in legal cases

**TIM HYLAND**

SPECIAL TO THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

**A**bbe Fletman is, today, a top Philadelphia litigator, but she started her career as a journalist.

Spurred on by a business-writing internship while an undergrad at the University of Chicago, Fletman spent the first four years of her professional life covering business news for the Charlotte News and, later, the News & Observer in Charlotte, N.C.

Fletman had one problem with journalism: By rule, she says, the job did not allow her to be involved.

“As a newspaper reporter, you’re really not permitted to be involved in your community,” said Fletman. “That’s because of the requirements of objectivity. But I knew I wanted to be involved in the community.”

She landed at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, began her legal career in Philadelphia, and, in the years since, has been busy staying involved — in the courtroom, in politics and in her community

Fletman has represented women athletes in an equal-rights case at Slippery Rock University. She has served on the boards at the Free Library of Philadelphia, Albert Einstein Medical Center, and the Women’s Law Project, among others. She worked as counsel to such high-profile Democrats as Gov. Ed Rendell, outgoing Mayor John F. Street and Sen. John Kerry. She even beat the federal government in a recent election suit.

“I’m one of those fortunate people,” she said, “who does not require a lot of sleep.”

She’s also a tremendously talented attorney, according to her peers.

Fletman is known as a natural litigator



who backs down to nobody — a reputation that preceded her when she applied for a job at Cherry Hill-based law firm Flaster Greenberg.

“I got a resume which was very impressive, so I asked around,” said Peter Spigel, the managing partner at Flaster Greenberg who first interviewed Fletman. “Everyone I talked to spoke very highly of her. We set up a meeting and I knew she was exactly the kind of litigator we were looking for — strong, tough and smart.”

At the time, Flaster Greenberg was searching for a top-quality courtroom lawyer who could bolster the firm’s commercial and intellectual property practices. Fletman was seeking a new challenge after several years with Philadelphia law

### UP CLOSE

**NAME:** Abbe Fletman

**AGE:** 48

**TITLE:** Head of the litigation section of the intellectual-property group

**EMPLOYER:** Flaster Greenberg, Cherry Hill

**EXPERIENCE:** Before joining Flaster Greenberg, Fletman worked at four other law firms. She also worked for four years as a reporter for the Charlotte News and the Charlotte News & Observer.

**EDUCATION:** Chicago University, BA in history; University of Pennsylvania Law School, JD; Temple University Beasley School of Law, LLM in trial advocacy.

**HOMETOWN/BIRTHPLACE:** Philadelphia

**RESIDENCE:** Philadelphia

firm Wolf Block. Spigel saw Fletman as a perfect fit. Fletman agreed.

She’s been at Flaster Greenberg for two years now, and has delivered big wins in tough cases.

“She’s not afraid to take on the tough cases,” Spigel said. “She’s not afraid to take cases for the oppressed or minorities. And that’s what we look for in a litigator.”

Those qualities were fully on display in one of Fletman’s more high-profile cases — Choike vs. Slippery Rock University.

Slippery Rock’s women athletes sued it to block its attempt to cut two women’s varsity sports. Fletman and her firm convinced the court to put a hold on the cuts.

Currently, the case awaits settlement.

Spigel said it was a perfect case for Fletman. “[Slippery Rock] was basically ignoring the federal rules. Abbe got a great result. It was something everyone in the firm could feel good about,” he said.