

## Mary Pat Rosen

As a plaintiff's-side personal injury attorney for Charfoos & Christensen PC in Royal Oak, Mary Pat Rosen said she enjoys making a difference in the lives of people who most need help to get better again.

And as vice president of the newly formed Oakland County chapter of Impact 100, Rosen is contributing to projects that make a difference in the community.

Rosen spoke with Michigan Lawyers Weekly about what the organization does, working with medical students, and being a coach and photographer.

### What does Impact 100 do?

There are Impact 100 organizations across the country and now there's one in Australia. This one woman [Wendy Steele] started this philosophy of bringing at least 100 women together, who would donate \$1,000 annually and become a member. Then 100 percent of that \$100,000 would be used for a grant for a nonprofit organization's specific project in one of five different areas — arts and culture; education; environment and recreation; family; and health and wellness.

Each of the board members has taken on the responsibility to chair a grant review committee for each one of those five areas, with four or five group members on each committee. Then each group will come up with a finalist from their designated area, and it's presented to the full membership in October, when we vote on our first grant recipient. And what's so nice about this philosophy is every member has a vote.

We're also learning about so many needs in Oakland County and letting others know that, too. It makes a bigger impact than doing individual things on a smaller scale. There's power in numbers. We started our group in November 2015 and got our 100 members within six months.

### What kinds of professionals make up the Oakland group?

You name it. Our board alone has a retired engineer, another is a marketing consultant, people with degrees in finance, and we have a former TV news reporter from another state who moved here.

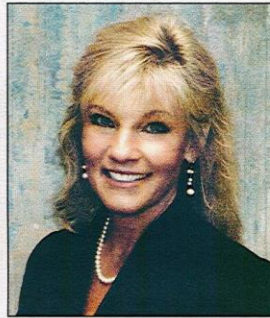
### Does the group branch out into other charitable endeavors?

We've had social gatherings with members, and because we're all involved in other causes, there's opportunity to help there, too. Recently one of our members said, "Hey, this one organization needs help next week. Anyone want to help?" So 10 of our members volunteered to do that.

### Going into your career, as you were earning your J.D., you worked with the Michigan Department of Labor's Commission for Handicapper Concerns and the Commission for the Blind. How did your experience with them affect your career?

In those organizations, I helped write legislation for independent living centers. I remember specifically an independent living center being built in Kalamazoo. So what the commissions did was take me out there, blindfold me and take me into the city. They said, "You need to know this in order to help write this legislation, to give purpose for what you're doing." That was probably my first exposure, because I was relatively young, to that.

And with doing plaintiff's personal injury work, I think I help give a voice



to people who need it. When I graduated law school, I thought I wanted to do corporate work and human resources, things like that. But I quickly realized I didn't. With what I do now, I think I make medicine better. In one case, they changed the hospital's policy because of my case. That's good.

### Your law firm allows Wayne State medical students to shadow your attorneys. How does this work out for you and for them?

They do it for 30 days. It's an elective they can take in their fourth year. What I've observed in conversation is it opens their eyes to how to practice medicine better. They're reviewing medical records and asking, "Why wasn't *this* put in there?" and better understanding the thought processes and how physicians communicate with patients. For us, their insights are invaluable to us. We take them to case evaluations, depositions and trials, so they see the whole legal process. And then we tell them, "We don't ever want to see you on the other side of the table." *(laughs)*

### As a master at University of Detroit Mercy School of Law Inns of Court, what do you do?

We get together from the fall until the spring and meet once a month. We meet with students and take them through a case, presented from beginning to end. We discuss social issues important to the case and different philosophies, such as, "What do you think about the law in this case? Is it good or bad? Should it be changed?" This makes them think of different scenarios and play devil's advocate. It allows us as more seasoned lawyers to convey some of our experiences and how we've handled things or what we would have done differently. There are federal and state judges in this, too, and their insight provides such valuable information.

### You're also giving insight at another school, Cranbrook Middle School, as coach for its boys cross-country and track teams. What do you get out of that?

Besides them providing laughter? *(laughs)* I do a lot of strength and conditioning with them, so I am teaching them good health habits that will hopefully carry them through the rest of their lives. We feel like we're more than just coaches. We make them shake our hands every day, look us in the eye and ask us how our day was. We ask how theirs was — and surprisingly they want to tell us. We ask if they're having any problems in school or with a particular teacher. And of course we teach good sportsmanship, representing not just yourself but your school and team. We teach a lot of life lessons.