

# Michael Fenton

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, SHATZ, SCHWARTZ & FENTIN, SPRINGFIELD | AGE: 27  
LAW SCHOOL: WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW  
BAR ADMISSION: 2012

FOR MANY YOUNG PROFESSIONALS, earning an MBA and a law degree at the same time would be plenty. Michael A. Fenton, however, in 2009 became the youngest member of the City Council in Springfield's history and authored a historic foreclosure ordinance that was the first of its kind. This year, he became council president. Meanwhile, Fenton has developed a successful practice in estate planning, land use and business law.



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

*Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?*

**A.** My biggest achievement has been my ability to successfully multi-task in the last three years, in terms of completing law school, my MBA, developing a successful legal practice and becoming an elected official. That required a great deal of commitment. I'm extremely passionate about being an attorney, and I'm really happy to have found such a great practice in Springfield to help me realize that dream.

*Q. What's the most satisfying case or matter you've worked on so far?*

**A.** The most satisfying case was the sale of a large closely held family business that helped a longtime client achieve their dreams in retirement.

*Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?*

**A.** Steve Grossman, our current state treasurer. He's been a friend to me both personally and professionally and has provided me with a great example of how to lead and how to foster longstanding relationships.

*Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?*

**A.** The best piece of advice I've been given was never give up — not ever. Those are words to live by for the personal relationships that matter to you, for the professional causes that define who you are, and for the moments in life that require an ability to persevere.

*Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?*

**A.** Don't be afraid to explore a variety of areas of law. While your passion should guide your practice, you should also recognize that circumstances outside your control will sometimes dictate the path you pursue, and that's a normal and healthy progression for a successful attorney. Seize the opportunities that are in front of you.

*Q. If you hadn't become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?*

**A.** I have my MBA, so I probably would have ended up in the corporate world in some respect.

*Q. If you could meet any famous lawyer in history, who would it be?*

**A.** Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.

*Q. What's the toughest part of your job?*

**A.** Finding time for myself, my family and my friends.

*Q. What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?*

**A.** It's a trait that I dislike in myself, but also one that I think has provided me with a lot of opportunity, and that is my willingness to take on a variety of challenges at once.

*Q. What's one thing about you that might surprise people?*

**A.** I really enjoy Tyler Perry's "Madea" series. I love those movies.

*Q. What was your very first job?*

**A.** Working at the Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield as a guest services representative.

*Q. Describe yourself in one word.*

**A.** Passionate.

*Q. What do you do to blow off steam?*

**A.** I play ice hockey.

*Q. Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?*

**A.** I don't think any attorney can rule that out, but it's certainly not in my immediate future plans. **EW**