

*Attorney Kristine Zajac...
Strong Criminal Defense...
and Family Law*

ABOGADA



SENTINEL: *Why did you become an attorney? Was it something you wanted to do since you were young?*

Kristine Zajac: "Well—I learned Spanish—I started when I was age 12. This will connect up to your question—my grandmother, my paternal grandmother, got me into learning Spanish. She knew that Spanish would be big in the future. I lived in Argentina for a year, and then I studied Spanish Literature at the University of Minnesota and graduated. I knew that I could either teach Spanish for a career, or do FBI work, or law. And so I chose to be an attorney—I thought it would be a good combination with the Spanish. So no, I can't say that ever since age five that I wanted to be an attorney. I thought that maybe I wanted to be a teacher. But I chose to be an attorney, instead.

"I think I had a 3.95 ["A" grade point average] or something like that in Spanish and I passed all the tests and whatnot, but to be honest, I don't think I got into the Masters Program—for *education*. Even though—I think they were looking for natives—native speakers, which I'm obviously not.

"So I applied then to the law school and decided to go to law school instead. So I almost became—I seriously considered being a teacher."

SENTINEL: *What law school did you go to?*

Zajac: "William Mitchell."

SENTINEL: *You said you lived in Argentina for a year—at what age and why?*

Zajac: "Right out of high school—age 18. Why? I just always wanted to have that inter-cultural experience."

SENTINEL: *So after you graduated, you just decided to take a year off and travel?*

Zajac: "Well, my Spanish teacher told her students how, in order to truly learn a language, you have to learn it through immersion. So I researched different countries and wanted to go to Argentina because it's very European while at the same time it's Latin, they speak Spanish there. So I went there for a year."

SENTINEL: *Did you go there by yourself?*

Zajac: "All by myself—but with the Rotary Exchange Program."

SENTINEL: *So they help you—*

Zajac: "You have families that you live with. So I lived with three different Argentine families down there. And I continue to keep in touch with them and I go back every two years or so."

SENTINEL: *That was a pretty independent thing to do.*

Zajac: "Well, at the time, I didn't think it was, but when I look at 18-year-olds today, I think, wow—then I realize how young I was."

SENTINEL: *You work alone as an attorney—*

Zajac: "A solo practitioner."

SENTINEL: *Right. Obviously there's some independence involved in that—as an attorney, as a woman. Can you talk about that? Why didn't you just join a firm?*

Zajac: "Well, I've been on my own since 2000, but when I first graduated from law school, first I worked for a Judge in Hennepin County, here—Judge Aldrich—who I've appeared in

[ZAJAC—continued on next page]

