

EXECUTIVE SNAPSHOT

Kelly Watson | FOUNDED PARTNER, WATSON ROUNDS

Who was your mentor?

There is no one individual I view as a mentor. I am a trial lawyer, both professionally and at heart. The court system is where I developed as a professional and as a business owner. So, if I have a mentor, it is the courts.

How do you celebrate a big deal?

Both my partner and I are rather quiet, private and hard-working professionals. We don't go out and party or engage in extravagant celebrations. For instance, just a few weeks ago my partner (Michael Rounds) tried a patent case on behalf of an international business (JCM Global). He won the case and received a judgment on behalf of his client for \$11.4 million dollars. To celebrate, we had dinner at his house. That was the extent of our celebration. The next work day he was at his desk. A few years ago, I tried a case and received a \$5 million verdict for my client. I don't believe I held any type of celebration. I know it doesn't sound exciting, but that is how we work.

What do you do to relax when not at work?

I enjoy sports. I snow ski every weekend during the winter, which is my favorite sport. I also snowboard, water ski and wakeboard. I firmly believe that the way to be successful in a career is to work hard and play hard.

If you weren't running this law firm, what would you like to be doing?

I have never had a work desire outside of the law. After finishing college and before law school, I worked as a sheriff's deputy. However, that wasn't a career goal. It was just something to do while I took a break from my formal education.

What is your biggest goal as a businessperson?

My goal, along with that of my partner, is to continue to grow our firm. We provide a very high quality of law to our clients. We want to use our current work as a platform to add clients and lawyers to service those clients. There is no end to this goal. It is a constant and continuing effort.

What would people be surprised to learn about you?

I am a very private person. If the people who know me don't already know it, they certainly aren't going to learn it here.

When traveling for business what are your favorite places to stay and why?

I rarely stay in hotels. If I am traveling, I always look for a small out-of-the-way place such as a small bed and breakfast or motel. I do not like ostentatious spending, fancy dining or the bright lights. I prefer small intimate settings that are homey.

What is your favorite place to work?

I don't have a favorite place to work. I do like that I travel between offices. The changes keep things fresh and keep me from getting bored.



Kelly Watson took the long road to success as an attorney. The founding partner of Nevada-based Watson Rounds fell in love with skiing in college and decided a law career could wait. The then-22-year-old took a year off before graduate school. That one year turned into five when Watson landed a job in the Douglas County Sheriff's Department as a patrolman

and enjoyed life. "Frankly, it was hard to go back to school because I was living such a good life, skiing and living in Tahoe," he said.

Watson left the slopes for the books and enrolled at Pepperdine University School of Law in Malibu, Calif. The California native now practices 70 percent personal injury insurance defense and has his main office in

Reno. The rest of his time is split between Las Vegas and San Francisco. A January stay at Wynn Las Vegas was an exception to his usual out-of-town accommodations. If it is a long trial, he prefers to live in his recreational vehicle. Seventy percent of Watson's work is now insurance defense, but traveling helps to keep it interesting, he said.