



## Getting on with Life Enables Heroic Clare To Right a Wrong Turn

By Cynthia Kincaid

Jamie Clare, '88, honestly admits that law school wasn't in the cards while an undergraduate. He didn't know he would become a lawyer; he also didn't know that it would end up helping him in ways he never could have imagined.

"I had taken a law class in college, and my professor knew a professor at McGeorge," says Clare, member of Cole Schotz, PA in New Jersey. That class set him on the path.

Clare's law career started out quickly and impressively: internships for the Honorable James T. Murphy and California State Senator Tom Hayden, and a summer associate position with a San Francisco law firm, specializing in commercial litigation, which eventually led to work in maritime litigation. All was going well for Jamie Clare.

In 1991, everything changed.

A traffic accident in Golden Gate Park left Clare a paraplegic, relying on use of a wheelchair for the rest of his life. He was just 28 years old.

"My life was upside down literally and instantly," says Clare. Despite the terrible circumstances, Clare came to realize that his law degree from Pacific McGeorge just might save him. "I knew that my brain and hands still worked," he says. "I knew I was going to be fine because I had a profession."

After months of physical therapy, while working per diem for a local attorney, Clare also started working for the Legal Aid Society for Marin County. "I went to legal aid and started to help people with much worse problems than mine," he says. "It was by helping others that I helped myself."

Eventually Clare moved back to New Jersey to be close to his family. He passed the New Jersey Bar in 1994 and has been working in construction and employment litigation ever since.

After successfully litigating against his current employer in 2001, they asked Clare to join their firm, which also has an office in New York. Clare made partner in 2004.

Married with two daughters, Clare plays competitive wheelchair tennis, runs the New York Marathon, writes for various legal publications, and raises funds for spinal cord injury awareness and research.

"When I visit someone who is newly injured," says Clare, "I encourage them to get on with their lives and not let anything hold them back."