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## Playing Ball

*Tracy Warren is juggling two careers, as a sportscaster and a labor attorney with Buchalter.*

By Skylar Dubelko  
Daily Journal Staff Writer

Tracy Warren's childhood was all sports, all the time.

"I grew up with three older brothers and a father that loved, loved, loved sports," the San Diego-based labor and employment attorney said. "I don't remember a time when we weren't playing sports."

Whether it was on a baseball infield, a football gridiron or the ice hockey rink, as a child Warren "was always the fourth member of the team" with her brothers.

### In Recess

One of her brothers — Ronald M. Warren, a New Jersey tax attorney — said, "At a time when gender differences were clear, Tracy blended in and played with the boys."

In high school, she took up basketball and softball and continued to play the latter while studying broadcast journalism at The College of New Jersey.

"After she graduated, I don't think she wanted to leave sports behind," Ronald Warren said. "She always tried to meld sports into some sort of professional endeavor."

Warren had her sights set on sports broadcasting, and after completing a masters degree in broadcast journalism at Temple University in 1989, Warren said she became the first female sports reporter at television stations in Philadelphia and Grand Rapids, Michigan.

"[I] found a way and kind of just persevered," she recalled.

Warren later won Emmy Awards for her work on the Philadelphia 76ers pre-game show and a feature she completed on marketing Michael Jordan.

As a young, female sports broadcaster working in a historically male-dominated profession, Warren said she noticed "a lot of women entering into contracts." Many of



Courtesy of Tracy Warren  
Labor attorney Tracy Warren, left, handled commentary with Missy Heidrick at the women's Big 12 Basketball championships in March.

them, she added, "had no idea what they were signing."

"I thought, 'Well, somebody's got to be helping an underserved population with understanding their contracts and pay equity.'"

Warren said her older brother Ronald encouraged her to go to law school.

"I wound up getting accepted by [Notre Dame Law School], and I'm Irish Catholic, so you don't say no when God calls," Warren explained. After graduating from law school in 1999, NBC Sports asked her to provide on-air commentary for softball games during the 2000 Olympics in Sydney, Australia.

"It was the best experience I could ever have," she said. "And I'm thinking, 'Do I want to pursue law? Because this is just fantastic.'"

Warren has since found a way to do both. A Buchalter shareholder and member of the firm's labor and employment group today, Warren said, "I work with a lot of coaches, especially females who are underserved. I also work with men in women's professions. I help them with their contract negotiations."

One of Warren's clients is Patty Gasso, the head softball coach at the University of Oklahoma.

"She's now the first female softball coach to be paid a million dollars," Warren said. "It is a huge thumbs up for the profession, ... and it's a huge goal for women in pay equity."

Describing his sister as an uncommon woman, Ronald Warren said, "[She] balances two very demanding professions very well and excels at both."

Warren is currently opening Buchalter's San Diego office, a new challenge that's forced her to pick and choose her broadcasting gigs more judiciously, she said.

"When I started at Buchalter, I was calling Big 12 women's basketball,"

Warren said, noting those assignments took her to West Virginia, Kansas, Texas and Oklahoma City. But when softball season started, her work to help build Buchalter's presence in San Diego required her to "dial back a little bit."

"It's just been a juggling challenge," Warren admitted. "As long as you're pretty transparent, you tell everybody what you're doing, it all works itself out."

"Buchalter is incredibly supportive," she added, describing firm president and CEO Adam J. Bass as "so progressive."

"He's all about equality and parity, and he embraced it, and so I continue to do it," Warren said.

According to Bass, Warren is positive, energetic and has a great voice for broadcasting.

"I love it," Bass said, adding Warren "knows a ton about sports."

As an attorney, Bass said Warren is "always there for her clients [and] for other folks in the firm."

"She brings the same attitude and charisma, hard work, dedication [and] teamwork that she had in her athletic career to her legal career," he said.

Although firm colleagues have been supportive, Warren still feels "the broadcast arena far outpaces the legal arena in terms of equality."

"I'm going to be candid. It has been fantastic on the broadcast side," Warren said, "I always say, 'Sometimes the locker rooms are better than the courtrooms,' because I was always treated with civility."

Covering Charles Barkley during his time with the Philadelphia 76ers was a good example, she said.

"I was specifically assigned to do a couple stories on him, ... and I asked him, 'Do you have a problem?'" Warren recalled. "I was the only woman in the locker room, and Barkley would always say, 'If you don't ask me any stupid questions, we're going to get along just fine.'"