

Richard Byrne



Freedom Area Class of 1970

"Be Prepared." -Boy Scout Motto

Rick Byrne, a 1970 Freedom Area High School graduate, was born in Ambridge on July 31, 1952 to Raymond (Jerry) and Geraldine (Gerry) Byrne. In fourth grade he moved to Conway and the Freedom Area High School District.

Byrne was active in the Boy Scouts, joining a newly formed Troop in seventh grade, and has the distinction of becoming the first Eagle Scout in Conway. The lessons learned in scouting, including the Scout Oath and the Scout Law, have guided Byrne throughout his life, and for many years he served as a Cub Scout and Boy Scout leader.

In high school, Byrne was what might be termed a nerd-jock (rather than a jock-nerd); he was president of the National Honor Society and captain of the cross country team. Byrne ran a pretty mean two-mile in track. Byrne graduated from Freedom Area High School in 1970.

As a child growing up, Byrne had aspirations of being a lawyer. He also enjoyed and did well in math and science. His high school teachers encouraged him to take engineering in college, but Byrne did not know how to pursue his legal goal with an engineering degree. Prior to graduating from high school, he was counseled that he could major in engineering in college, attend law school and combine those two degrees to become a patent lawyer.

Byrne attended Carnegie-Mellon University and was awarded a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering in 1974. He then attended George Washington University Law School, which had then and still has an excellent patent law program, and was awarded a Juris Doctor degree in 1978. He served as president of the Student Patent Law Association in his last year of law school.

Byrne was admitted to the bar of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1978 and to the District of Columbia in 1979. Following law school graduation, Byrne spent two years as a law clerk and technical advisor to Judge Jack Miller of the United States Court of Customs and Patent Appeals in Washington, D.C. Byrne returned to Pennsylvania in 1980 and joined the Pittsburgh based patent and intellectual property law firm of Webb Burden Robinson & Webb. Byrne has remained at the same firm, now known as The Webb Law Firm, for his entire private practice legal career. The law firm has grown from eight lawyers in 1980 to forty-five lawyers in 2013 and is recognized as the premier patent and intellectual property law firm in Western Pennsylvania. His partners recently voted Byrne president of The Webb Law Firm.

Byrne has engaged in all aspects of patent and intellectual property law while at The Webb Law Firm, including patent preparation and prosecution, trademark matters, copyrights, opinion work, client counseling, and intellectual property litigation in the state and federal courts. Recently, Byrne is handling an extensive international patent and trademark practice, including filings made in the United States for clients from around the world, and filings made outside the United States on behalf of the firm's domestic clients. He has traveled extensively to Asia and has lectured Asian intellectual property lawyers on United States law.

During 1993-1994, Byrne was president of the Pittsburgh Intellectual Property Law Association. Since 2006, Byrne has been recognized as among the Best Lawyers in America in The Chambers USA America's directory for Leading Lawyers for Business, and as a Pennsylvania Super Lawyer. Byrne was named the 2011 Pittsburgh Intellectual Property Lawyer of the Year and the 2012 Pittsburgh Patent Litigation Lawyer of the Year by The Best Lawyers in America.

Byrne and his wife of 39 years, Marie, reside in Upper St. Clair, PA. They are the proud parents of Michael, Jeremy, Matthew and Peter.