

Reflections on Justice Ginsburg's Passing and the Ongoing Fight for Equality

The Milwaukee Business Journal recently featured an [op-ed column](#) by Reinhart attorneys [Jessica Hutson Polakowski](#) and [Monica A. Mark](#) on the passing of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and the vital need to continue her fight for equality. Jessica is the co-chair of the firm's Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Reinhart has long been an advocate of women's equality, and is fully invested in maintaining an environment that attracts and sustains the diversity of gender, ethnicity, religion, gender identity and sexual orientation among our attorneys and staff. We believe a diverse workforce provides the highest value for our clients by forging solutions to problems from different perspectives.

The following is a transcript:

Monica Mark: It's been a few days, and I still haven't really begun processing my grief over Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death. It's almost impossible to believe. She was so sharp, so intelligent, so compassionate, and so tireless in fighting for justice – she's been such a vital part of the court for so long that I can't imagine it without her.

Jessica Hutson Polakowski: I, like so many others, share your grief. I have been struck by how deeply and profoundly I feel this sense of loss, and I've struggled to understand it. I did not know this woman, and yet, the impact that her life has had on mine is enormous.

She was my hero. She relentlessly, fiercely fought to effectuate change. And, she succeeded. In such a tumultuous time, her story, and the story of the progress she achieved, fill me both with hope and a sense of duty. Her words — "Real change, enduring change, happens one step at a time" — have never held so much promise, or so much weight. As women practicing law, you and I know well that her work isn't done, and we owe it to her to continue her legacy.

Mark: I agree, and what's given me some real hope and comfort is that I think she would agree that her work doesn't — and won't — stop here. I spent Sunday re-reading some of her speeches, and I was struck by how much she emphasized that she didn't stand alone. She spoke about innumerable incredible women who

POSTED:

Sep 23, 2020

RELATED PEOPLE:

[Monica A. Mark](#)

<https://www.reinhartlaw.com/people/monica-mark>

[Jessica Hutson Polakowski](#)

<https://www.reinhartlaw.com/people/jessica-hutson-polakowski>



helped to effect change — Belva Lockwood, the first woman to gain admission to the U.S. Supreme Court Bar; Florence Allen, the first woman to serve on an Article III court; Sandra Day O'Connor, who needs no introduction.

To paraphrase the quotation you mentioned above, I think Justice Ginsburg took us several steps down the road to enduring change; now we have to continue that journey. And because of what she accomplished, we can. We can be the next link in the chain.

Polakowski: We can, and we must. Perhaps that is why her loss is affecting us so profoundly. She was a giant, and in her wake, I feel a deep sense of obligation. She famously said “Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you.” Her legacy is that she has given us the tools to continue to fight, and to fight together.

Mark: Absolutely. I was so lucky — I never had to think twice about whether I could clerk, or whether I could have an impact as a female lawyer. She did so much of that work for me and for all of us. It’s my responsibility not to waste the opportunities she gave me.

Polakowski: That’s the challenge that confronts us all today. We need to foster her legacy so that my daughter, and all children, never know the inequity that she faced, and never know a time when women are seen as something less. Let us live the example that she set. Let us be *notorious*.

Read more about Reinhart's commitment to Diversity and Inclusion [here](#).

These materials provide general information which does not constitute legal or tax advice and should not be relied upon as such. Particular facts or future developments in the law may affect the topic(s) addressed within these materials. Always consult with a lawyer about your particular circumstances before acting on any information presented in these materials because it may not be applicable to you or your situation. Providing these materials to you does not create an attorney/client relationship. You should not provide confidential information to us until Reinhart agrees to represent you.