Chief of the Month: Rebecca Eggleston, Arizona

Each month, the Center for Consumer Protection will provide an article about an Attorney General’s Office Consumer Protection Chief.

As a fairly new consumer protection chief, I’m honored to be in the company of so many other chiefs across the country who have been serving in that capacity for many years. At the first NAAG Consumer Protection Conference I attended, I was struck by the number of participants who had been working in their state attorney general’s office, and specifically in consumer protection, for 15, 20, even 25-plus years. It speaks to both the importance and the personal fulfillment of the work we do.

I joined the Arizona Attorney General’s Office as the chief of the Consumer Protection and Advocacy Section in April 2017. At that time, the section was divided into two units – Consumer Information and Complaints (CIC) and Consumer Litigation (CLU) – with an additional portion of the section devoted to consumer remediation programs. During a recent reorganization, the office’s Antitrust Unit was added to the section.

CIC is the face of the office to consumers. Our CIC team of 13 employees and 2 volunteers processes roughly 15,000 consumer complaints and receives 45,000 phone calls per year. Last year, their efforts resulted in $2.9 million in recoveries for consumers.

The CLU team consists of 3 legal secretaries, 5 paralegals, 4 investigators, 1 remediation/restitution program coordinator, and 12 attorneys. (Shameless recruiting plug: We are in the process of hiring 4 additional attorneys, so if you’re reading this and interested in moving to Arizona, get in touch!) At any given time, CLU handles roughly 20 local (i.e., non-multi-state) litigation matters, 50 local investigations, and 50 multi-states. One of the things we have emphasized during my tenure is the importance of each attorney preparing his or her cases for trial and communicating our willingness to go to trial to the targets of our investigations, bolstered by recent successes in doing just that. At the same time, it is vitally important that we treat targets fairly and, notwithstanding our comprehensive statutory powers, ensure that our investigations are governed by due process and the rule of law. I’m proud to say that last year, applying these principles, our CLU team recovered over $25 million in restitution for consumers.

Attorney General Brnovich has made it clear that obtaining restitution for victimized consumers is the first priority for the Consumer Protection & Advocacy Section – and I couldn’t agree
more. In fact, during General Brnovich’s tenure of just over four years, the office has recovered over $66 million in restitution and an additional $13 million in CIC recoveries. I’m grateful for the opportunity to play a part in making that happen, and most especially for an amazing team of people whose hard work and devotion to that goal has brought about extraordinary results for victims of fraud in our state.

Working with the people in the Arizona Attorney General’s Office to truly help people has made my job as section chief the most fulfilling role I’ve ever held. I was a high school math teacher for four years prior to attending law school at the University of Michigan. Following my law school graduation in 2008, I worked for seven years as a securities litigation associate for the global law firm Paul Hastings. I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to start my legal career working with incredible attorneys who taught me the importance of meticulous attention to detail in managing cases, and especially in legal writing. After that role, I transitioned to a legal nonprofit for a couple of years before making the move to the Attorney General’s Office in 2017.

On a personal note, I enjoy spending time with my husband, and spoiling our dog and our niece and nephews who live in Michigan. After spending the first 33 years of my life dealing with polar vortexes and long, gray winters in the Midwest, I thank God nearly daily for the opportunity to live out west with all of the sunshine and ability to be active outdoors that it offers – or as I once heard outdoor adventure described, “jumping into the picture, rather than just looking at it.” I also love to travel with my husband and with my sisters. In September 2018, my husband and I spent two weeks touring Belgium and Germany, and we are looking forward to a likely mission trip this summer with a group from our church to Jordan and Israel.