Kim Wilson

The common thread through all my work is making sure that normal folks have a chance against the corporations that try to rule our lives.

One of the founding partners of my law firm had worked with Ralph Nader for the Minnesota and Montana Public Interest Research Groups, and the other was a VISTA volunteer. They wanted a "streetfront" law office to help those in need, so I was exposed to a lot of consumer and public interest cases early on. We've been using NCLC's manuals since the 1990s — I distinctly remember relying on NCLC's Unfair and Deceptive Acts and Practices Manual in prevailing at the Montana Supreme Court in a case where the Court first applied Montana's CPA to banks and lender.

I was super excited to get the opportunity to serve as a Fellow with NCLC in 1999, and continue to relish the professional connections and friendships made at NCLC.

After I returned to Montana, I really ramped up my own consumer practice, and was poised to further assist consumers when the mortgage crisis hit and inundated our firm with loan modification fraud and foreclosure fraud cases. There were so many folks who were living on the edge, and in a lot of cases we were able to save their homes and get them some financial relief. There's also such emotional baggage for clients around whether they'll be able to beat the bank or the mortgage company and get back to some semblance of normal, so it means a lot to get those kinds of resolutions and give them some peace of mind.

I worry about law students who graduate with stacks of student debt and feel pressured to take whatever job they can. Sometimes that's a corporate job that will pay the bills, and sometimes that's representing defendants, but there are other options, too. There's such a huge need for young talent in the field of consumer law, and you can build a very successful plaintiff's practice while doing meaningful work on behalf of regular people. I have found it to be an incredibly satisfying career.

— **Kim Wilson,** Morrison Sherwood Wilson & Deola, PLLP