

ALUMNI PROFILE: FREDERICK KENNEY '91

Kenney is Coast Guard's No. 1 Attorney

BY SAMANTHA BRONSON

As judge advocate general for the U.S. Coast Guard, Rear Adm. Frederick J. Kenney Jr. '91 has a diverse set of practice areas to oversee. In addition to handling the standard legal areas of any military branch, the Coast Guard's attorneys also act as legal counsel for the branch's extensive regulatory and law enforcement functions, which includes everything from regulating the shipping industry to enforcing drug trafficking laws.

"People used to ask me what kind of law I practice," Rear Adm. Kenney said. "I would say, 'It depends on what my next phone call is.'"

Appointed in January as the Coast Guard's top attorney, Rear Adm. Kenney now oversees the delivery of all legal services in support of the Coast Guard's worldwide missions, its units, and 50,000 personnel. He likens it to being the senior partner of a law firm; in Rear Adm. Kenney's case, the "firm" includes 184 military attorneys, 92 civilian attorneys, and 87 legal support personnel. He also is the Coast Guard's chief counsel, serving as the branch's primary contact for legal advice for the Office of the General Counsel and the Office of Homeland Security.

Rear Adm. Kenney, who joined the Coast Guard in 1981 shortly after graduating from college, attended the USF School of Law while stationed in the Bay Area.

"The thing that was most impressive to me about USF was the personal attention I got from the professors," said



Rear Adm. Kenney, who served as editor-in-chief of the *Maritime Law Journal*.

"They took the time to sit down with you and talk about where you're going. I really liked the way that they brought the teaching of law to a practical level. You really had to think about how you would apply things in the real world and that has helped me in my practice ever since."

His practice has included a substantial amount of effort protecting the marine environment, which he considers his most rewarding work. He has helped prosecute shipping companies that in-

intentionally dumped oil and other hazardous substances into waterways, worked on the international treaty that banned certain chemicals used on ships' hull paint, and chaired the drafting committee that wrote a convention for the discharge of ships' ballast water. The convention will apply to all ships whose countries have adopted it.

Rear Adm. Kenney formerly served as chief of the Office of Maritime and International Law, where he was the head of the U.S. delegation to the International Maritime Organization's legal committee. He has also served as a judge on the Coast Guard Court of Criminal Appeals.

"The most challenging aspect for any Coast Guard attorney is staying ahead enough so that you can be ready to meet the next challenge, because you know it's coming," Rear Adm. Kenney said. [USF]

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