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Day in the Life: Kathryn Zeltwanger

Interviews and Profiles



DAY IN THE LIFE

Banner artwork by ACC



Name: Kathryn Pruss Zeltwanger

Title: Deputy General Counsel

Company: Armstrong Group

Location: Butler, Pennsylvania



Kathryn's hen, Grace, and her baby chicks.

5:00 am

Time to get up. Twenty minutes of meditation. A quick set of push-ups. Let the dogs out. Check on the water and food for the chickens (and play with the new chicks!). Enjoy the beauty of the sunrise while cursing the already oppressive heat. How can it be this hot and sticky this early in the morning? Quick shower. Get dressed.

6:00 am

Downstairs. Feed the dogs. Update the whiteboard on the fridge with today's activities and summer homework assignments (yes, my son's school gives homework over the summer). Open up the notebook with my daily to-do lists and menus. Get started.

6:20 am

Everybody else is up and moving. I've got waffles going while starting on my son's lunch and snacks for camp and my lunch for work. Waffles are such a great breakfast option. It's easy to whip up a batch of batter to keep in the fridge and use over a few days. And it's easy to let them cook on their own and just keep half an eye on them while doing other things.

7:05 am

Everyone's out the door. I usually listen to audiobooks or podcasts during my commute. It's been particularly crazy the last few weeks, so I'm listening to an old favorite from the Dungeon Crawler Carl series. The voice-actor is *so* good and the books are funny — it's nice to get a few laughs in

during an otherwise uneventful drive on a backcountry highway.

7:45 am

Stopping at Vintage, my favorite coffee shop in Butler. The décor is so cozy and the owners are just great people. Another small spot of sunshine.

8:00 am

At my desk and logging in. Let's get to it. I go through whatever emails came in after I left the office yesterday. Most are junk, which I delete, or newsletters, that I skim through, clicking on a few articles of interest. Nothing requires an immediate response, so I move on to reading the articles of interest. I like to start my workday with these articles to get my brain in full work-gear. Today, there are two articles on AI in the legal profession, an article about some new guidance from the FCC, and an article about some new employment rules in Ohio. Our company is a true conglomerate, with several very different operating divisions operating across 27 states. With only six attorneys in the department, five of us are generalists, handling whatever comes up for whichever operating division needs something that day. I like it — the job is always changing, and I'm never bored.

Also, it's Wednesday, which is my administrative day and is almost always packed full of meetings and calls. Time to get that started.

9:00 am

First meeting — the weekly safety roundup. Legal, EHS, and HR get together briefly and go over any incident reports that came in the previous week. Today's meeting is pretty routine and full of the usual, minor things. That's good. I like a quick and non-notable safety roundup.

9:30 am

Legal invoices. I schedule this grunt-work on my calendar every Wednesday morning, (i) so I actually do it and (ii) so I can tell firm billing departments that I will get to whatever their problem is on Wednesday and there's no sense in bothering me about it at any other time. Most of them respect that. I have to admit — this process has gotten a lot easier since we moved to electronic billing.

10:00 am

Call with outside counsel about an HR policy that we are updating. While there are many good things about having a team full of generalists, we do run into issues from time to time that require us to call in a specialist. This is one of those times. Outside counsel is making great progress on this project. Hopefully we'll have it wrapped up by the end of the week. Which means I'll spend part of next week drafting the training content.

10:30 am

Discussion with our paralegal supervisor about various workflow issues and other small department management things.

11:00 am

A free hour! Sort of. Free time is not actually time for me to get any of my own work done. This is generally when the deli-line starts. The general counsel drops by with updates on a project that we're working on together. Regulatory pops in with a question. So does HR. One of the other attorneys comes in to brainstorm an issue with a contract negotiation. And our summer law student stops by with some questions about an assignment.

12:00 pm

Lunch. I've learned to be very protective of my lunch period. Yes, I'll occasionally schedule a CLE or something similar over lunch, but I try hard not to. When the weather is nice, the attorneys will often go for a walk around the neighborhood. When the weather isn't so nice, like today, I use the time to cross off personal items on my to-do list. Schedule the dogs for their annual appointments with the vet. Check the parent portal for school to make sure I've submitted all of the forms necessary for the new school year. Send out a birthday card to a friend. Exchange a few texts with my mom. Oh, and eat my lunch. A salad with the last of the vegetables from last week's CSA bounty. Country living means good food.



The poster for the ACC Annual Meeting 2025 in Philadelphia features a dark blue background with a geometric pattern. At the top left is the 'ACC 25' logo with 'ACC ANNUAL MEETING OCTOBER 19-22, 2025 PHILADELPHIA' text. To the right, a pink banner reads 'KEYNOTE SPEAKERS'. Below the banner are three circular portraits of the speakers: Andrew Ross Sorkin (male, blue shirt), Lindsay Czarniak (female, blonde hair), and Nicole Lynn (female, dark hair). An '&' symbol is placed between Lindsay and Nicole. Below each portrait is the speaker's name and a brief description. The bottom section is divided into two green horizontal bars: 'MONDAY, OCTOBER 20' on the left and 'TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21' on the right. A 'Sponsored by DILI TRUST' logo is in the bottom right corner.

ANDREW ROSS SORKIN
Award-Winning Journalist
Author of *Too Big to Fail*

LINDSAY CZARNIAK
Emmy-Winning Sportscaster
Master Storyteller

NICOLE LYNN
Trailblazing NFL Agent & Attorney
Author of *Agent You*

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21

Sponsored by
DILI TRUST
Your AI-POWERED SaaS for Legal

12:30 pm

Back to it. A quick email check. Respond to several. Review a draft pleading that our outside litigator sent over — send back some redlines.

1:00 pm

Senior staff meeting. Once a month, I get together with the paralegal supervisor and the senior paralegals and we talk about ... whatever they want to talk about. Today's agenda: A big project at

one of our divisions that's going to require some thoughtful staffing, the upcoming training with our insurance broker, the progress of our most junior staff member, an issue with one of our business folks continually "forgetting" to use our standard intake process, and an idea to improve one of our more complicated operational processes. Good meeting.

2:00 pm

Every week I have a one-on-one with a member of our staff on a rotating schedule. Sometimes this is just a quick check-in. Sometimes we chat the whole hour.

2:45 pm

Just wrapped up with our staff member. And that concludes the administrative portion of my week. Checking back into my email, which I've ignored for almost two hours.

3:10 pm

Quick call with one of the VPs about an issue his team is having with a contractor.

3:25 pm

Stop over at the GC's office with an update on a handful of things.

3:35 pm

Check in on the attorney who came in earlier with the negotiation problem.

3:40 pm

Swing past HR to make sure there is no follow-up on the question they had earlier. Got an update on another issue.

4:00 pm

Half an hour to go. Time to get things wrapped up for the day. One last check on email. One last check with the staff. Put together my must-do list for tomorrow.

4:30 pm

Out the door. On my way to pick up my son at camp. This commute is longer and on a much more annoying road. It's all stop lights all the way into Pittsburgh. Mind you, it's not the Baltimore beltway, which I spent three years navigating when I worked as a paralegal between college and law school. But, compared to my morning drive, this is a slog.

5:25 pm

Pick up my son from camp. He's really enjoying this week and we chat about the project he's

working on most of the way home.

5:45 pm

Stop at the farmstand on the way home and pick up our CSA allotment for the week, which includes a giant bag of snap peas. Awesome!

6:00 pm

Home. Throw dinner together. I do menu planning and meal prep most weekends. I wouldn't make it through weekday meals without that prep. I'm mentally exhausted by this point in the day and having to make meal decisions while navigating the rest of the evening is just too much. Having the plan makes it easy. What's for dinner tonight? Check the list. Salmon, quinoa, roasted cauliflower. Easy-peasy.

7:00 pm

Clean up from dinner. Get the kid started on his summer homework. Two pages in the math packet. Two chapters of the assigned book. While he's doing that, I start in on laundry and a few other household chores.

8:00 pm

Homework done. Enough housework done. Time to relax. I grab a glass of wine, my son grabs a juice box, and we head out to the hot tub for a soak.

8:30 pm

Time to start the kid on the bedtime routine.

9:30 pm

Kid in bed. My husband and I spend some time catching up on our respective days.

10:00 pm

Bedtime.

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references for the busy in-house practitioner and other readers.

Kathryn Pruss Zeltwanger



Deputy General Counsel

Armstrong Group

Kathryn Pruss Zeltwanger is deputy general counsel for the Armstrong Group, headquartered in Butler, Pennsylvania. She serves as the primary counsel for four of the Armstrong Group's nine operating divisions, including its largest division providing cable, internet, and telephony services over six states. Pruss Zeltwanger also has primary responsibility for legal operations, employment matters,

and litigation for all of the Armstrong Group companies. Prior to joining Armstrong Group in 2009, Pruss Zeltwanger clerked for the Court of Common Pleas in Uniontown, Pennsylvania and worked as an associate attorney at Fox Rothschild's Pittsburgh office. Pruss Zeltwanger is a graduate of the Schreyer Honors College at Penn State and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. She currently serves as a Board Member for the Western Pennsylvania Chapter.