

Top Lawyer Douglas Wartell leads ADAM through its growth as a respected force in family law



As co-founder of ADAM, the American Divorce Association for Men, Douglas Wartell has led the way in bringing gender equality to family court on behalf of men.

“When I started ADAM with my law partner, Michael Hoffman, in 1988, it was pretty tough for the guys. Many of the judges were inclined to almost automatically give custody to the mother, except in the most egregious of circumstances, and they were awarding alimony like every man was Donald Trump,” Wartell says.

“I had also noticed that, as a result of this prevailing judicial philosophy, attorneys were advising their clients to enter into poor settlement agreements because ‘that is what the judge would do, anyway.’”

At that point, Wartell realized that there was a need for attorneys who would fight for their male clients. Thus, ADAM was born. He immediately noticed that by being well-prepared and strongly advocating his clients’ positions, he was able to achieve their goals and overcome many of the so-called biases.



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Under Wartell’s direction, ADAM’s Southfield office has grown to include nine attorneys, all of whom specialize in representing men in every aspect of family law — custody, support, property division, paternity, and prenuptial agreements. In addition, there are now offices operating in Flint, Lansing, Grand Rapids, and Traverse City.

“It’s a big change from when I first went out on my own as a lawyer in 1982. At that time, I think my most important client was suing Yogi the Bear for stealing his pic-a-nic basket,” Wartell laughs. “Now we represent everyone from business owners, doctors, and managers to blue-collar guys and students.

“Because our attorneys have specialized in this one area of law, they have all become excellent litigators in their own right. It would not surprise me if many — if not all of them — were to receive the top lawyer designation in the near future.”

Until now, Wartell has received one professional

honor: The book in his lobby filled with a collection of letters he has received over the years from clients thanking ADAM for bringing them fair treatment. “It always makes me feel great when our clients recognize the job we do for them. It’s fantastic that someone would take the time to write a letter of thanks, especially considering the circumstances,” he says.

“Now, receiving the second award from my professional peers as a top lawyer is the cherry on the sundae.”

Wartell’s top lawyer listing can be viewed in the Family Law section of this publication. Wartell and ADAM can be reached at 248-356-2326, or look for them on the Web at adamdivorcelaw.com.

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