



John S. Brendel, JD has been practicing business and employment immigration law for more than 25 years. His clients have been multinational corporations, hospitals, universities, and even inventors. Mr. Brendel has also served as adjunct professor of immigration law at the University of Pittsburgh and Duquesne University law schools. He currently serves as a board member of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation of Western Pennsylvania and previously served as its Chairman. And Mr. Brendel shares his home with a delightful pug, Chloe.

*Mr. Brendel, can you explain what “immigration law” is?*

JB - Immigration law is the legal process through which foreigners obtain permission to work in, study in or pursue a wide variety of activities in the U.S., depending on the circumstances.

*How did you become interested in business and employment immigration law?*

JB - I had studied economics, government and history as an undergraduate. Following law school, I received a DAAD Fulbright scholarship to study in Germany for a year. As a result of that experience, I wanted to have multinational experiences. When I began practicing law, there were no other immigration attorneys in Pittsburgh, let alone in my law firm. The opportunity arose for me to do a few immigration cases, because there was no one else to do them. After a few years, this work developed into a full-time practice.

*Can you share who has been your most interesting client or what was your most interesting project?*

JB - My most memorable case occurred in the late '80s during a brief time when Americans needed a visa to enter France. A famous French author pulled some strings to get me a last minute French visa so I could represent his son at the American Embassy in Paris to get him a US visa to return to the US.

*I know you have three wonderful children, two of whom live with cystic fibrosis. What would you tell another parent whose child was just diagnosed with cystic fibrosis?*

JB - I would advise the parent not to treat the CF child any differently than a child without the disease; have the same goals and expectations; stress physical activity and to keep him or her active; never skip treatments by incorporating them into your normal, daily routines; and keep a positive attitude.

*Are there special concerns about getting a dog that parents of children with chronic illnesses should consider?*

JB - Both of our CF children have asthma symptoms, and we were worried the dog dander would exacerbate their condition. That has not happened.

*How has Chloe changed life for your family?*

JB - Chloe has brought an element of silliness to our household. She helps make us laugh more. The children have said she is the best thing that has ever happened to us. She exudes positive energy and a kind of serenity.

*Can you tell us more about the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and how we might get involved?*

JB - The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation has events throughout the year that span all sorts of interests and age groups - bike-a-thon, bar crawl, Penguins dinner, wine auction. Our largest fund raiser, the Great Strides walk-a-thon, occurs in May. This event takes place in hundreds of locations all across the country. To find a walk site in your city, go to [www.cff.org/great\\_strides](http://www.cff.org/great_strides). To support or walk with one of our teams, Olivia's Offense or Paul's Pavement Pushers, go to [www.cff.org/Great\\_Strides/JanetBrendel](http://www.cff.org/Great_Strides/JanetBrendel). One could always make a contribution to support medical research.

*Anything you'd like to add?*

JB - Whenever Chloe hears Paul and Olivia's Cystic Fibrosis therapy machines starting up, she knows someone is on the couch and it is cuddling time! She hops up on the couch, snuggles against their legs and offers comfort!! This is one of the most endearing things she does.

You can read more about the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation at:

<http://www.cff.org/>

This website will tell you more about cystic fibrosis and also provide resources for finding a chapter in your area, volunteering to help kids with cystic fibrosis, learning about drugs in development, and even making a donation. So get involved and help in the fight for those living with cystic fibrosis!