A TRIBUTE TO

MATTHEW C. HAGEN, ESQ.

1977 – 2016

Matthew Hagen was larger than life -- with his parted, slicked back hair, broad shoulders, stretchy suspenders, and zeal for his clients and the courtroom, I affectionately called him Atticus Finch and Matt loved it -- (though it should be noted that he acquired the nickname **before** it was revealed that Atticus was a racist).

Matt was admitted to the New York State bar in 2009, after which he began working at the Monroe County Public Defender's Office. I met Matt in that office and instantly fell in love with him as a friend. He made me laugh, offered support and condolences during difficult personal and professional times, and he gave the absolute best hugs around.

While Matt's large, commanding presence was a sight to behold in the courtroom, Matt was also an incredibly funny and emotional man. In addition to Atticus, Matt also earned himself the nickname of Honorary Lesbian; for many of us at the office, he was a hilarious girlfriend-type confidant in a giant straight man's body.

He was also a strawberry-blond white boy from Boston, MA, who spoke perfect Spanish. Matt had so many unique, seemingly contradictory facets to him, and they were all a part of what made him so special and lovable.

Matt's death is particularly tragic because he was only 39 years old when he died. Matt had been working closely with attorney David Abbatoy on a wrongful conviction case when he passed away, and just a few weeks after his death, Mr. Abbatoy secured his and Matt's client a new trial on the case that came to light only because of Matt's unpaid yet tireless investigation.

Matthew Hagen is survived by his wife, Hillary Hagen, as well as their one year-old daughter, Paige; his two children from a previous marriage, Gwen and J.T. Hagen; his mother, Dianne Chapell Hagen; sister, Cate Masterson; and step-children, Tyler and Olivia, as well as many close friends who considered him to be family.

No words can adequately describe the complicated, wonderful man that was Matt Hagen. He will be sorely missed by the entire legal community but especially by those of us whose lives he touched deeply and forever.

Respectfully submitted by:

Silvia Lopez, Esq.