

Something Great is Brewing

For the Keegans, Hand-Crafting Beer is a Family Affair



When Thomas Keegan, Jr. '77 founded BrickHouse Brewery in Patchogue's oldest commercial building in 1995, he understood that he was honoring the proud legacy of this shipbuilding community on the Great South Bay. He was also carrying forward a proud family tradition of business success rooted in St. John's Law. His father, the late Thomas Keegan, Sr. '53, attended St. John's on the GI Bill and then formed and led what is now the Patchogue law firm of Keegan & Keegan, Ross & Rosner.

Following in his father's footsteps, Thomas, Jr. enrolled in the Law School's evening program, working for insurance companies by day. After graduation he joined his father's firm, where he is a partner today. This St. John's Law family grew when Thomas, Jr.'s sister, Maureen Keegan '85, attended the Law School. She is now a partner at Basch & Keegan in Ulster County, focusing on personal injury matters. Like her brother, Maureen was also drawn to the business of brewing beer. With her nephew, Thomas III, she launched Keegan Ales in scenic Kingston, N.Y. in 2003.

Thomas, Jr. and Maureen are not involved in the day-to-day operation of their breweries. Still they are very much hands-on owners who regularly draw on their lawyering skills to navigate business dealings in real estate, zoning, and liquor licensure. Beer recipes, brand identity, and trademarks also need global protection. Just recently, they resolved a long-time dispute over the award-winning Hurricane Kitty IPA, named after their mother, Katherine Keegan, and brewed at both BrickHouse and Keegan Ales.

All the hard work and dedication have paid off with the success of the Keegan family breweries. Among many awards and recognitions, Keegan Ales was named Best Brewery in

the Hudson Valley (2009), Best Brewery in New York State (2009), and Best Craft-Brewed Beer in New York State (2009). Early in 2010, *The New York Times* declared its Mother's Milk one of the top 10 stouts in North America.

Even with their busy lives as lawyers and entrepreneurs, Thomas, Jr. and Maureen maintain strong ties to *alma mater*. Thomas, Jr. teams in the BrickHouse Brewery venture with relatives and friends, including Law School alumna Debra A. Byrnes '82. He and Maureen also heartily embrace the Vincentian commitment to "doing well by doing good." They hire, mentor, and financially support St. John's Law students, and host alumni networking events at their breweries. They also sponsored the Law School's student-run Fall Fest this year.

Something great is definitely brewing.



L-R: Vice Dean Emeritus Andrew J. Simons, SBA President Joshua D. Williams, Dean Michael A. Simons, and Development Officer Matthew M. Sobotta enjoy refreshments donated by Keegan Ales at 2013 Fall Fest