

FIRM ASSOCIATED

Allan Kanner

Position: Kanner and Whiteley LLC partner

Age: 58

Family: wife, Robin; sons, Max, 14, and Eli, 12

Bachelor of arts in philosophy, University of Pennsylvania; graduate philosophy studies, juris doctor, Harvard University

In the late 1980s, nearly a decade after founding his firm, Allan Kanner entered some unpopular legal territory. He decided to take on the complexities of natural resource damages, something few lawyers were willing to tackle.

"Allan was at the forefront of natural resource damage law," said Conlee Whiteley, Kanner's law partner.

Kanner has since acquired a national reputation in the fields of complex litigation, environmental law and consumer fraud.

As major environmental disasters have occurred over the years, Kanner has been in the middle of several major cases. He is currently representing the state of Louisiana in the Deepwater Horizon litigation and the state of New Jersey against ExxonMobil in a major natural resource damages case.

"We have a great reputation nationally," Kanner said. "But it's pretty neat when your local people care about what you're doing." But 25 years ago, top lawyers wanted nothing to do with this type of litigation, Kanner said.

"They thought it was too complicated," he said. "But there was such an overwhelming demand. People were looking for this and yet there were not a lot of people thinking about these cases strategically."

Since then, several firms have entered the arena, but Kanner feels his firm remains the top one in the industry.

"Anybody can say I'm an expert in this or that," he said. "Really, over time you need to get results. That's the most gratifying of all."

-Sam Tabachnik

