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WHY I LOVE MY JOB

JESS L. ROSEN
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Entertainment Group
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AGE: 47

SALARY: Six figures.

WHAT I DO: I am an entertainment attorney for the national law firm Greenberg Traurig LLP. As a senior member of the firm's Atlanta-based entertainment division, my primary responsibilities include procuring, negotiating and renegotiating agreements between recording artists and their record labels, publishing companies, managers and merchandisers, to name a few. I also represent several significant record producers and songwriters, which places me at the negotiating table for several types of entertainment agreements for everything from live performances and touring to soundtracks, product endorsements, commercial agreements and book deals. My clients include well-known rock, rhythm and blues, hip-hop, jazz, blues, country, pop and Broadway performers as well as up-and-coming artists in all genres of music. I also supervise many of the attorneys in the firm's entertainment group. I've been with entertainment attorney Joel Katz for 12 years, and we merged our practice to Greenberg Traurig's entertainment group in 1998.

HOW I GOT STARTED: My passion for music began at the age of 6 when I began playing the guitar. I played professionally in music groups all through high school and college. Rather than going into corporate America, I became a full-time "gigging" musician. Over the years, I honed my skills as a jazz guitarist and played throughout the world with various jazz recording artists. In 1983, I found myself in Atlanta and began playing with a local jazz group in town. While leading the house

band at a prominent jazz club in the mid-1980s, I met Joel Katz. I was contemplating studying law at the time and Joel said, "Come see me when you get into law school." This invitation stuck with me because his entertainment practice meant I could still have a connection to the music industry, and eventually Joel hired me as a file room clerk. It took a lot of hard work through many levels at Joel's firm. Now I'm one of the senior entertainment partners in the firm. Our clients include Monica, BB King, Sammy Hagar, Earl Klugh, Kenny Chesney, Brad Paisley, Collective Soul, Dallas Austin, Swizz Beatz, Gino Vannelli, Steve Tyrell, Heather Headley, Christina Aguilera and Lil' Kim.

BEST PART OF MY JOB: My job is most fulfilling when the negotiations I've handled contribute to the long-term success of our clients. Many of our clients are Grammy-award-winning performers and industry leaders, and it's gratifying to play an important role in developing, enhancing or rebuilding their careers. Many of my clients appreciate that I have personal experience in the industry. I can relate to the issues they face.

MOST CHALLENGING PART: It's a daily challenge to successfully interact with the wide variety of industry professionals, all driven to succeed. My job is a delicate balance of contract negotiation and psychology. The range of details included in any particular deal can at times be very stressful due to the high financial stakes and the fact that, ultimately, an artist's career is the subject matter of the deal, but it's an unavoidable part of the process. It's not just slapping an agreement together and getting everyone paid; it's about creating a deal that works for all parties. It's like assembling a custom-tailored suit.

BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT SO FAR: I can't say that there is one "biggest"



JEAN SHIFRIN / Staff

Entertainment attorney **Jess Rosen** says his clients appreciate his background as a professional musician because he can relate to their needs. Rosen is a senior partner of Greenberg Traurig LLP's Atlanta-based entertainment division.

achievement in my career, but two clients' nods of approval for work well done come to mind. First, to be immortalized in the lyrics of the Waylon Jennings song "Back Home" was surely a great pat on the back. Second, after renegotiating a recording agreement on behalf of longtime firm client BB King, you can imagine my elation as a guitarist to receive an autographed "Lucille" guitar presented to me by BB himself. However, most of my achievements come through the results of my efforts in meeting and exceeding clients' expectations.

WHAT KEEPS ME GOING: My wife, Debbie, who is my biggest supporter, and my two daughters, Chandler and McLane; working to achieve the goals of our clients and the firm. Also, all of us at Greenberg Traurig's entertainment division and the firm worldwide motivate and support one another to help the firm stay at the top of the business.