

Brenda Gray was born in Elmhurst, Illinois, but she didn't live there long. Her father worked for a pharmaceutical company and was transferred all over the United States. By the time she was in second grade, she had lived in Villa Park, and Lombard, Illinois, Washington D.C./Arlington Virginia, Houston, Texas, Sigourney, Iowa, Northbrook, Illinois. Her family finally settled in Deerfield, Illinois. By then, she was ready to go into second grade. She was an adventurous young lady that did not fit the norm of her older two sisters; Brenda saw herself more of a Scout in To Kill a Mockingbird. Growing up in Deerfield was the perfect "Leave it to Beaver" neighborhood. All the kids played together outside; neighbors knew each other, and she could walk into her friends' homes. Brenda walked 3 miles in 3 feet of snow – up hill both ways to school every day (or at least that is what her kids believed). Her neighborhood had many well-known people and her claim to fame at 11 years old was that she babysat Brian Piccolo's (running back for the Chicago Bears) kids. Her final move was to Phoenix, Arizona, after her parents split when she was going on thirteen, the worst time in a child's life to make drastic changes. The move to Phoenix changed her whole perspective on life.

Brenda married when she was in her first year of college and ended up having her first child at age 22. She began taking classes here and there while working and being a mother. She was working on her degree in psychology but took a job working in the field of social work, so her field of study changed. She worked with juvenile boys, which to this day she can still say was one of the most rewarding jobs that she's ever had. When her youngest was in kindergarten, she ended up filing for divorce. This was another move in her life that defined her.

After she graduated from college, she realized that she could not raise her kids as a single mother on the wages that she made working as a social worker. A friend had told her about a legal field that she should consider; the field was called Paralegal. Brenda realized that she could combine her love for working with children with the legal part of social work. She attended college and completed her certification as a paralegal. Unfortunately, but fortunately, not long after she obtained her certification, her boss laid her off. Her boss told her that she knew that Brenda would never leave and move on, and Brenda thanked her one day for those words. Brenda took a couple of small intern type jobs in the legal field to get her feet wet. The first was employment law – she enjoyed this field, and the attorney she worked with at the time. The second position was working part-time with a boutique IP law firm. She never heard of Intellectual Property law before and found it fascinating. Brenda had the privilege of working for an inventor who made a lot of changes in patent law and helped her decide to stay working in IP.

Brenda moved to the bay area back in 2007 and didn't know anyone. She took advantage of the beautiful landscape and hiked the mountains where she met a group of hikers from Team in Training – so she joined. For a few years with TNT, she made great friends and inspired to step out of her comfort zone; and took a chance at training for a Triathlon, as well as endurance cycling. Now she's on the board of an all-

women's Triathlon group called Mermaid Mafia, where they inspire and train women. She is also a member of the Santa Cruz Triathlon Association and has done numerous triathlons from Hawaii to Chicago, and of course, up and down the coast of California. She's cycled hundreds of miles and raised money for various organizations. Brenda inspired her daughter to run and her daughter has run a few half marathons with her, including the last Nike Women's Marathon in San Francisco. She is currently training in CrossFit and will begin preparing for the Arizona Ironman 2020.

Brenda is motivated by knowing that she is making a difference and helping others. She is new to SCCoLPA and just recently began participating and taking advantage of classes and gatherings. Since she has been in the field of IP for over 20 years, being a part of SCCoLPA provides her with insight into other areas of law. Networking is also one of the benefits of being part of SCCoLPA for her.