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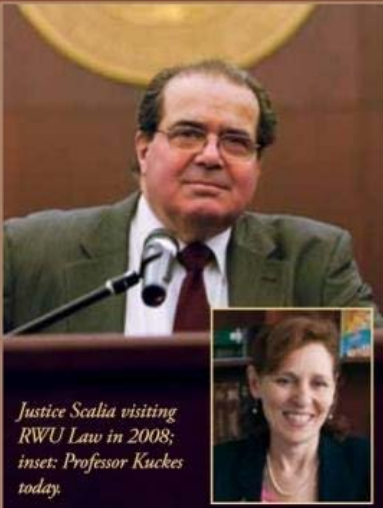
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Newsroom

Clerking for Scalia

Professor Niki Kuckes clerked for Antonin Scalia when he was a judge on the influential D.C. Circuit. Here she shares some memories of her clerkship.

After a successful term at Yale Law School, RWU Law Professor Niki Kuckes won a coveted clerkship with Antonin Scalia, then a judge on the highly influential U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. In 2012, she shared some memories of that time with RWU Law Magazine:



Justice Scalia visiting RWU Law in 2008; inset: Professor Kuckes today.

NIKI KUCKES
Professor of Law

I clerked on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit for Judge Antonin Scalia, prior to his elevation to the U.S. Supreme Court. The issues before that court often involved administrative law questions that could be fairly dry, but even then Judge Scalia had a reputation as a dedicated conservative. I was therefore deeply impressed to learn, on working with him, that he was always willing to debate with any clerk who had a sound argument to make about the legal issues we were considering, no matter what the clerk's political perspective might be.

That year was an intense and life-changing experience. I still remember many of the stories and, even more often, the colorful Latin phrases Judge Scalia would use during oral arguments. He is one of the smartest people I ever have met, and his quick mind, intellectual confidence and sheer writing skill were deeply inspiring. My clerkship was an experience I always will be grateful for, and one that has opened many doors for me. I often tell my students that they'll never regret taking off a year to clerk for a judge after graduation. It's one of the most exciting and fulfilling jobs that a new law school graduate can have.

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-Professor Niki Kuckes