



About Mark

Mark Totten is a fourth-generation Michigander, with family roots in Mason and Macomb counties. He was raised in Kalamazoo by his mother, a single-parent and first-grade teacher who taught in the public schools for over thirty years. A graduate of the Kalamazoo Public Schools, Mark held a part-time job from age twelve and then paid his way through college. He later graduated from Yale University with his law degree and a Ph.D. in Ethics.

Mark began his legal career in Washington, D.C., where he served in the U.S. Department of Justice, handling appeals before some of the highest courts in the nation and working alongside some of the federal government's top lawyers. He later clerked for a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, where he advised on critical national security cases winding through the courts in the wake of 9/11.

When their daughter was born, Mark and Kristin returned home to Michigan to raise their family. Today, Mark is a law professor at Michigan State University College of Law, where he teaches criminal law and ethics. In addition to training Michigan's next generation of prosecutors, defense attorneys, and judges, Mark also teaches a course for first-year students called "Lawyers and Ethics." The class reflects one of Mark's key convictions: that the best lawyers are not just experts in the law and skilled advocates, but carry a set of core values – integrity, loyalty to the client, and an unwavering commitment to fairness for all.

For the past few years Mark has also protected Michigan families from violent and other crime as a volunteer federal prosecutor, where he has successfully handled several critical appeals. Mark's tough advocacy has protected children from child predators, victims of domestic violence from their abusers, and senior-citizens and low-income persons from predatory lenders.

Mark's service reaches beyond the courtroom and classroom, as well. Locally, he's a member of the school board in Kalamazoo, home of the Kalamazoo Promise. Mark has fought for strong schools at a time when public education is under attack. On the other side of the globe, he helped launch one of the most innovative programs for saving the world's rainforests – an internationally-recognized conservation model that provides affordable, high-quality medical services for villages surrounding Indonesia's largest lowland rainforest, as an incentive to stop illegal logging.

Mark's wife, Kristin, is also an attorney and advocates for children with disabilities in the schools. Kristin has been an outspoken leader in Michigan, educating parents about their rights under law and making sure children with special needs get the services they deserve. Mark and

Kristin have two kids, Grace (age 6) and Jake (age 4), and live in Kalamazoo. Mark is an avid runner and cyclist and the Tottens love backpacking around Michigan. Best memory? A 20-mile trek along Michigan's pristine Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in Summer 2011.

Mark – A Track Record of Fighting for People

- Drafted the [leading plan](#) for how state attorneys general can protect families and homeowners from the fallout of the economic crisis and hold wrongdoers accountable under new federal powers given to the states in the wake of the Wall Street meltdown.
- Fought for the conviction of a child predator who used a hidden camera while attempting to produce child pornography, while winning strong legal protections for children.
- Ensured a predatory mortgage lender, who ruined the lives of dozens of senior-citizens and low-income people in the years leading up to the economic crisis, stayed behind bars and completed his sentence.
- Helped win a critical legal challenge brought by a man who viciously murdered a 19-year old woman and her baby the day before she was to testify against her murderer on charges of rape.
- Successfully argued a case that secured the conviction of a man with an extensive track record of domestic abuse, while strengthening a federal law that keeps guns out of the hands of people who commit domestic violence.
- Won several cases that strengthened federal laws keeping guns out of the hands of convicted felons.

For a press kit, including photos and a more detailed biography, visit [here](#).

For a recent profile in the *Detroit Legal News*, visit [here](#).

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