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FROM THE EDITOR

Good work should be recognized, no matter where you find it. Late nights and demanding clients may offer a different legal experience than life inside a company, but that doesn't mean a lawyer's work can't have great impact on their company, their industry and their community. Congratulations go to these wonderful lawyers who serve their organizations as in-house counsel.

Our special section divides our honorees into categories based on their organizations: health care, nonprofit or government organization, private company and public company. Two rising stars received special recognition in this year's awards: Ben Klocke of Bridgewater Bank and Amanda Parker Rusin of Regis Corp. Read more about their budding careers on page 24. We also separately honored two honorees for their lifetime achievement: James L. Chosy of U.S. Bancorp and Mary Wawro of Ryan Cos. US Inc. (Read more on page 6.)

Jim Chosy serves as executive vice president and general counsel for the country's fifth largest commercial bank: U.S. Bank. While his work was similar at his previous position as general counsel at Piper Jaffray Cos., his current position is bigger in scale, which he acknowledges in his efforts to champion such causes as equity and inclusion. "As long as I have this position of influence," he says in his profile, "I intend to do what I can to increase diversity." He is also a champion of programs that help lawyer well-being, as well as stay up on current technologies that impact his industry, such as AI, biometrics and virtual reality.

For Mary Wawro, general counsel at Minneapolis-based Ryan Cos. US Inc., her "North Star" has led the way for her entire career: Always do your best, produce quality work, and work with integrity. At Ryan, Wawro's department of 18 employees provides counsel in the company's land acquisitions, financings and sales. Her team handles real estate closings from across the company's 15 U.S. offices, which over the years has included some of its biggest projects such as transferring the old Sears tower in South Minneapolis into the Midtown Exchange and building the Marina Heights project in Tempe, Arizona.

Congratulations to them and the other Minnesota Lawyer 2020 In-House Counsel Awards honorees.

— Joel Schettler



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HEALTH CARE ORGANIZATION

Trudi Trysla

Fairview Health Services

As senior vice president and chief legal counsel at Fairview Health Services, Trudi Trysla has helped the organization navigate through many issues related to legal and ethical adherence to federal and state law, as well as risk management, drawing on her experience as legal counsel for both Medtronic and Mayo Foundation.

All of that has come into play as the state, country, and world deal with the coronavirus pandemic.

“Obviously, all of this is new territory, but I’m relying on my experience with not just legal issues but also strategy and leadership,” she said. “As an in-house counsel, you have to be ready to be immersed in any situation, even one like this, and respond quickly.”

Although this is a formidable challenge, Trysla has been through other significant changes while in her

role. Since joining Fairview, she’s helped the organization through four CEOs, has taken over supervision of the compliance function, and had had to fill in as chief human resources officer on an interim basis. She’s also guided the company through the Sanford Health negotiations as well as mergers, acquisitions, and a difficult joint venture agreement.

Through all those experiences, there’s a common thread. Trysla noted that she feels fortunate to work in health care—not just now, when everyone is in crisis mode, but also during calmer times.

“There’s a feeling of purpose in this role, I consider it a privilege to work with providers who change patients’ lives every day,” she said. “It’s why I do what I do. I feel like I have a small role that makes a big impact.”

—Elizabeth Millard

HEALTH CARE ORGANIZATION

Kay Tuveson

HealthPartners

As a young attorney, Kay Tuveson got used to being called a “girl lawyer” and being told that she would be best off working on wills and divorces. In fact, part of the reason she went to law school was that the gender inequities of the day all but mandated it for someone with her ambitions.

“My first job out of college was working for Dave Durenberger in the U.S. Senate,” she recalled. “During that time, I learned I needed a law degree if I wanted to keep working in Washington. At that time, a woman needed a law degree to be equal with a man who had a B.A.”

But while in law school, Tuveson got her first taste of building something meaningful, helping to develop a legal practicum at the then-William Mitchell College of Law. That led to a job at Ramsey Clinic,

a 200-physician group, where she was given the freedom to create an in-house practice that suited both her and the clinic.

Years later, she’s senior counsel with HealthPartners, where she’s been since 1998. There, she covers professional health care liability, litigation, health care ethics, professional state licensing board matters, other medical/legal issues.

Unusual for an in-house attorney, Tuveson is actively involved in litigation, associating with outside defense counsel and independently handling cases.

“My favorite thing about what I do is how wonderful the people here are,” she said. “I’m honored to work with a tremendous group in the law department, and the health care providers I represent.”

--Dan Heilman



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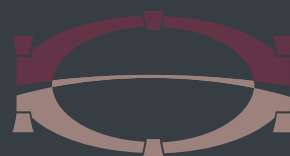


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LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

James L. Chosy

U.S. Bancorp

Not every in-house counsel wants to serve both their organization and the larger legal profession. Jim Chosy insists on it.

As executive vice president and general counsel for U.S. Bank, Chosy runs the company's Law Division. For the division's 250 professionals, Chosy labors to support their legal work and the profession as a whole.

Prior to U.S. Bank, Chosy was general counsel at Piper Jaffray Cos. The work was similar to his current role, but the scale is larger at U.S. Bank, the fifth-largest commercial bank in the U.S.

One of Chosy's priorities is diversity, equity, and inclusion. He champions numerous related initiatives, including a 2019 initiative that set diversity expectations for outside counsel firms. "As long as I have this position of influence, I intend to do what I can to increase diversity," he said.

Chosy has also strengthened the bank's pro bono efforts. "I can't take credit for it, because it was built by people who came before me," he said. "It's my good fortune to be able to nurture a great pro bono program."

Law Division lawyers donated 1,900 hours to pro bono work in 2019, which translates to more than \$700,000 in legal work for 45 organizations.

Chosy has also supported programs promoting lawyer well-being and mental health, and ethics, including a stand-alone ethics office with a chief ethics officer and dedicated ethics ambassadors for each U.S. Bank business line.

Chosy is particularly proud of Innovation Academy. The program helps employees stay up on new technologies — blockchain, AI, biometrics, virtual reality — that affect the industry. "It's been terrific," he said. "It's an exciting time to be a bank lawyer."

—Holly Dolezalek

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Mary Wawro

Ryan Cos. US Inc.

As general counsel at Minneapolis-based Ryan Cos. US Inc., Mary Wawro has had what she calls a "North Star" guiding her work.

"For me, that has always been to create opportunities for challenging work for my team," Wawro said. "On the legal side, it is important to always do your best, produce quality work and work with integrity."

When she joined Ryan in 2002, Wawro's small legal department oversaw the company's land acquisitions, financings and sales. Today, with 18 employees, her department also provides counsel in construction, property management, design, building maintenance and capital markets. She also implemented insurance risk management for company construction projects.

Company North Region president Mike Ryan appreciates Wawro's entrepreneurialism. "This talented in-house team produces very high-quality

work over a significant volume at a lower-than-market cost," he said, adding that Wawro oversaw the company adopting an electronic paperless data collection system that has streamlined administrative costs.

Currently, Wawro's team handles about 65 real estate closings a year from across the company's 15 U.S. offices, she said. Through her years at Ryan, that has included some of the company's biggest projects, such as transforming the old Sears tower in south Minneapolis into the Midtown Exchange and building the Marina Heights project in Tempe, Arizona.

"I have always loved working on real estate transactions and seeing the result that it can have in the community," said Wawro, who plans to retire in May. "It can transform areas, creating jobs and beautiful spaces for people to live and work."

—Scott Carlson



Celebrating lifetime achievement

U.S. Bank applauds Jim Chosy.

**Congratulations to Jim Chosy on your In-House Counsel
Lifetime Achievement Award from Minnesota Lawyer!**

We proudly recognize the outstanding career and leadership of our own Jim Chosy. Jim has been a leader in Minnesota's legal and corporate community since 1989. During his tenure at U.S. Bank, he has made diversity, equity & inclusion a top priority and has driven innovation to meet the changing needs of our company and our industry. He serves as a mentor within U.S. Bank and the broader legal community, and is actively engaged with several community and professional organizations.

Thank you, Jim, for your many contributions to U.S. Bank!



Jim Chosy

Senior Executive Vice President and General Counsel



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NONPROFIT or GOVERNMENT
organization

Cameron Boyd

Metropolitan Airports Commission

After graduating from the University of Minnesota Law School in 2002, Minneapolis native Cameron Boyd was recruited by both the Metropolitan Airports Commission, where he had worked as a student legal intern, and the Minneapolis firm of Lindquist & Vennum, where he had been a clerk; he chose the latter. Two years later another position with MAC opened up and he joined the high-profile public agency. In 2017, Boyd was promoted to general counsel for MAC, replacing the retiring Tom Anderson.

Boyd enjoys the daily variety of his post, overseeing a wide range of legal matters, including those related to airport food, retail and passenger service concessions, labor issues, litigation, real estate leasing and airline agreements, and numerous other contracts. Boyd has also help supervise the largest capital expenditure in MAC's history, the \$1.6 billion overhaul of

MSP airport.

He's proud that MSP airport has earned the title of Airports Council International's Best Airport in North America in its category size, for the last three years.

One area Boyd and other MAC leaders have spent increasing amounts of time on over the past couple of years is wage and labor law issues. MAC is in the final stages of adopting a minimum wage ordinance that will affect not only airport employees, but the larger airport community. "We need to ensure a quality work force here at the airport."

The MAC has recently had a high level of turnover activity among the senior leadership team, which has "provided an opportunity for us to build a new, high-functioning team, find new opportunities for the organization and shape it in the way we feel we can best operate," Boyd said.

—Dan Emerson

NONPROFIT or GOVERNMENT
organization

William J. Hardacker

Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community

Before and after graduating from the University of Minnesota Law School, Willie Hardacker worked for Native American attorney Kurt Bluedog and began learning about federal tribal law.

In 1995 he became the in-house counsel for one of the firm's clients, the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community tribal government. Although not Native American, he found his passion and today oversees legal issues involving the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux and its business holdings.

"At this point in my career, I see my main goal of mine as continuing to change the narrative of how tribes are viewed in the broader community," he said. "Indian tribes really deserve a place of greater stature in our communities."

Hardacker led a 2012 deal the tribe made with Canterbury Park that thwarted a plan to introduce video slot

machines at the race track. The tribe agreed to pay Canterbury \$84 million to increase horse racing purses and to market their attractions jointly.

The move stopped the expansion of gaming "and "brought peace to the valley and been beneficial for the tribe, Canterbury and all the other tribes in Minnesota," he said.

Recently Hardacker has fought the Minnesota Indian Gaming Association's approval of sophisticated electronic pull-tab games that mimic slot machines. The attorney, who is Hispanic, also developed a "diverse" staff of seven attorneys, five of them women.

In the community, he serves on the board of Coffeehouse Press and mentors University of St. Thomas law students. "I take away as much from these relationships with law students as I give," he said.

—Frank Jossi



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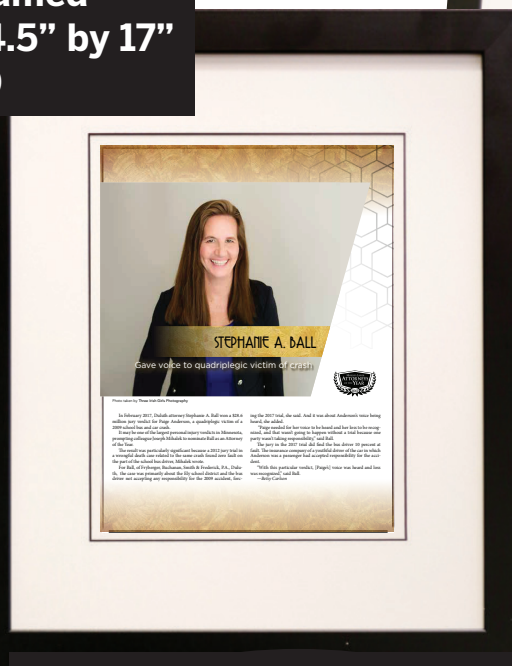
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NONPROFIT or GOVERNMENT organization

Eric Larson

Saint Paul Port Authority

CHS Field, Treasure Island Center, Beacon Bluff Business Center. As in-house counsel for the St. Paul Port Authority, Eric Larson has played a significant role in shaping some of the most iconic economic development projects in Saint Paul in the last decade.

Larson estimates that these and the other projects he has stewarded, including the port authority’s four operating barge terminals, have created as many as 5,000 new jobs in St. Paul, along with an increased property tax base of approximately \$10 million.

As in-house counsel for the port authority since 2008, Larson enjoys the challenge that comes with facilitating complex developments from acquisition to completion. “I’ve been fortunate to play a major role not just in traditional transactional legal work, but as an executive lead along with the development team

for the Port Authority,” he explains. Larson says his motivation is the mission. “What drives me is making sure that the work serves public need – especially in neighborhoods where there has been traditional disinvestment and where the marketplace both public and private has not adequately put resources into those areas and people,” said Larson. “Being able to work with organizations where we do what we can to turn it around. That gets me excited.” Beacon Bluff is one such example. The property on St. Paul’s East Side was vacated by 3M and as Larson put it, “was in danger of becoming 46 acres of cold storage.” Through a public-private partnership, the port authority redeveloped the site into an industrial zone that is now home to eight businesses employing 472 people. —Julie Swiler

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PRIVATE COMPANY
with annual revenues over \$500 million

Brooke Tassoni

Cargill Inc.

From pigeons defiling salt piles to a major RICO case, Brooke Tassoni appreciates the variety of working as senior lawyer and regional litigation team lead at Cargill Inc.

"I don't think you can find a richer legal practice," Tassoni said of her role at the Minnetonka-based agribusiness giant, the largest private company in the United States.

Tassoni recalls fielding questions early in her Cargill career about pigeons and other birds that were disturbing salt piles at company plants.

More recently, Tassoni and "a stellar team of in-house and external counsel," managed litigation that in 2018 secured a \$122 million judgment against a North Carolina distributor found to have overcharged Cargill in a RICO conspiracy.

"We should have been running an FBI shop on that one," Tassoni said, praising the work of internal lawyers, investi-

gators and outside counsel in one of Cargill's largest civil matters.

Tassoni joined Cargill in 2006 after five years in complex litigation at Robins Kaplan. Serving as in-house counsel offered more balance as Tassoni was raising young children and enabled her to collaborate with clients and see projects through from beginning to end.

In leading U.S. and some global litigation at Cargill, Tassoni manages a team of three lawyers and three paralegals.

A member of Cargill Law's Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Tassoni works to increase the number of diverse in-house attorneys at Cargill. She also supports retention and development of diverse outside counsel, mentoring young associates at partner firms and encouraging their involvement in Cargill matters.

—Todd Nelson

PRIVATE COMPANY
with annual revenues up to \$500 million

Frederick Dawe

Comtrol Corp.

Not every in-house counsel's first task is to keep employees from going to jail. But Fred Dawe has handled that and more.

The Mitchell Hamline Law School graduate has been in-house counsel for most of his career. The son of a former CAO loved solving complex operational and governance challenges, helping to balance business ownership and operations.

He joined PSINet in 1997, and in 2004, not long after PSINet was wound down, he became General Counsel and Corporate Secretary for Comtrol Corporation.

One of his first tasks was to help the company deal with a recent IRS raid, and the sole director and CEO's flight from charges of tax evasion. "There was this huge governance question of leadership and what we do next," Dawe says. "And under government scrutiny, we needed to keep the personal matter from affecting the business."

Dawe is a corporate generalist, supporting day-to-day operations like contracts and intellectual property, advising on legal matters, and calling in subject matter experts where needed.

Dawe also sits on the boards of several organizations, including the Minnesota Chapter of the Association of Corporate Counsel and the Minnesota District Export Council.

Last year, Dawe completed Comtrol's asset sale to German company Pepperl + Fuchs. His fluency in German and decadeslong relationship with family shareholders helped him to negotiate with Pepperl + Fuchs' large acquisition team and guide the shareholders through the risks and requirements of the sale. "Choosing the right counsel and working effectively as a team really pays off," Dawe says. "Especially when you're outnumbered 45 to three."

—Holly Dolezalek



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PRIVATE COMPANY
with annual revenues up to \$500 million

Alison McElroy

Lift Brands

Alison (Ali) McElroy hit the ground running after law school, first clerking for Minnesota Supreme Court Chief Justice Kathleen Blatz, and then going to work at Faegre & Benson in that firm's corporate group.

But after four years, she wanted something else: complete immersion in the matters she worked on. As it happened, Snap Fitness — a Chanhassen-based franchisor of fitness clubs — was a client.

"I had worked with them on international franchising matters," she recalls. "They didn't have an in-house counsel, and they were growing really quickly."

McElroy found that she was attracted to the idea of getting more involved in the business — being a part of a growing company. She now works for Lift Brands, an umbrella organization created by Snap Fitness for its growing

roster of businesses, including Snap Fitness, 9Round, Kosama, STEELE 365 and Fitness on Demand.

"As an outside lawyer, you see snippets of projects — you don't get the ramp-up or the follow-through," she said. "Being able to see those projects through was a big benefit for me."

McElroy works primarily on business transactions, franchising, and international business. In fact, she recently took on the company's international business operations.

Last year, she led the company through a partial acquisition by the private equity company TZP Capital Partners II as part of an effort to help Lift build on its recent growth.

"The people here are great," McElroy said. "I feel lucky that I was able to see this opportunity and go after it."

—Dan Heilman

PRIVATE COMPANY
with annual revenues up to \$500 million

Dan West

Doran Cos.

When Dan West drives around the Twin Cities, he's in a unique position as an attorney, because he can point to the buildings he's worked on.

"I may not be on the construction crew, but I feel like I've helped make those buildings happen behind the scenes," said West, who is General Counsel at Doran Cos. "Being part of this team is very rewarding, and I've appreciated the opportunity to be part of a business, and support the company's mission."

West joined Doran in 2015 with considerable litigation and in-house experience, coming from Best Buy, where he established leadership working on intellectual property and contract disputes.

The most notable project in the past year for West wasn't a building, but the sale and subsequent reorganization of

the company itself. As negotiations took place, West defined and articulated the roles of each member of his newly expanded department, and ensured a smooth transition.

In addition to that major development, West is also integral to the company's response to the coronavirus pandemic, he said. Like every company, Doran is navigating through uncharted waters on the current situation, and West appreciates being part of a team that's focused on maintaining the health and safety of employees while safeguarding the company's future.

"What motivates me is helping build solid strategies that will last, no matter what," he said. "I see myself as being in a supporting role, but what I'm supporting is so important."

—Elizabeth Millard





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PUBLIC COMPANY

Dionne Blake

Target Corp.

One of Dionne Blake’s many responsibilities as a corporate counsel at Minneapolis-based Target Corp. is helping manage the retailer’s response to crisis situations. So, she’s been spending much of her time in the early spring working to help minimize the impact of the rapidly-spreading coronavirus.

A South Florida native, Blake graduated cum laude from the University of Miami Law School in 1996 and worked for two South Florida law firms and another corporate retailer before moving to the Twin Cities to join Target in April of 2009. She’s held a number of positions. Since 2018 she has been assistant general counsel, senior director of employee relations, and provides company-wide employee relations support.

Blake has been active in a number of professional groups including the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity and

Minnesota Women lawyers, and is a frequent public speaker. Since starting her career, Blake has seen an evolution in workplace diversity. “While we have a long way to go, there has been a general recognition that diversity makes us all better.”

As a black female lawyer, she’s a champion and advocate for all women, but in particular, for black women lawyers and other lawyers of color, both inside and beyond Target. She’s currently the leader for Target’s Legal Affairs diversity and inclusion initiative. Blake devotes a significant amount of time and effort to mentoring younger female and minority attorneys. “I probably have five to seven or more mentees at any time. It’s very important to me. I want to give back and make sure I leave the profession better than I found it, and bring people along on the journey.”

—Dan Emerson

PUBLIC COMPANY

Courtney Enloe

3M Co.

When Courtney Enloe got a call from a recruiter in 2017 about a great job in the Midwest as head of litigation, her first reaction was absolutely not. At the time, she had just taken on business counsel responsibilities at McKesson in San Francisco and had no desire to leave.

But the recruiter’s description piqued her curiosity. She would report to Ivan Fong, a leader with a national reputation. And, the company was 3M, maker of so many iconic products.

“I talked to my husband and said I want to check it out but there is zero chance we are moving,” said Enloe. “So, I came to Minneapolis for an interview and fell in love. I fell in love with the people, fell in love with the company, and here I am.”

Enloe says that each successful outcome she’s had is the result of collaboration

with colleagues, both lawyers and non-lawyers, with different skillsets. One of her strengths is building and motivating highly functional teams. At 3M, one of her first tasks was growing the litigation department to a team of about 30 including eight attorneys. “What’s best about my team is the diversity of thought. We have people from all regions, all backgrounds, and all areas of expertise,” she said.

Enloe believes a diverse team leads to more accurate decision-making in an arena that often involves complicated high-stakes litigation. “You want people who see things differently,” she explains. “If you surround everyone around a focal point you eventually get to the clearest picture. And that is what diversity is about. Inclusivity is about making sure the team feels they can tell it like it is.”

—Julie Swiler



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PUBLIC COMPANY

Karen Park Gullivan

Graco Inc.

Karen Gullivan likes to say that even though she’s an attorney, she has an engineer’s mind. That suits her well in her practice at Graco, where she oversees legal issues in an array of areas.

“I get to work on projects that become diverse,” she said. “With one matter, I can get into trade compliance, corporate governance issues, ESG sustainability, environmental compliance, product safety compliance.”

Gullivan spent a short while in private practice after earning her law degree from William Mitchell. She enjoyed working in both corporate law and business litigation, but quickly gravitated toward the in-house world.

“I wanted to go in-house so that I could have one client that I could learn inside and out,” she said. “I wanted to learn a business in a way that would mean the type of lawyering I did would be very

practical and meaningful.”

During her time at Graco, her work has become more varied and involved, to the point where she is counted on as a resource for top-level planning that has nothing necessarily to do with lawyering.

“I know what their interests are, so I can pony up my legal work in a way that’s most meaningful for them,” she said. “I know what they’re looking for. But at the same time, I’ve gotten involved more on the business side.”

One example of that is drug pricing and the rate at which costs of medication increases. That’s an issue that Graco is keeping a close eye on, and Gullivan is part of that process.

“I try to help understand the market dynamics of things like that, even if it has little to do with the legal side.”

—Dan Heilman

PUBLIC COMPANY

Boyd Johnson

SPS Commerce Inc.

At Minneapolis-based SPS Commerce Inc., Boyd Johnson is a unique general counsel in the world of multinational public companies.

With just himself, a part-time attorney contractor and a legal intern, Johnson is demonstrating you can lead an in-house legal department without a large group of attorneys.

“I am not aware of any other publicly traded company of this size that has a general counsel that is able to support the entire global organization with only two full-time attorneys,” said Jonathan Zimmerman, an attorney at Faegre Baker Daniels who is familiar with Johnson. With 1,500 employees and \$308 million in revenue projected for 2020, SPS today is more than triple the size it was in 2012, when Johnson joined the company.

SPS Commerce is a leading retail network connecting global trading partners to maximize their supply chain operations. The company

processes about 2,800 sales contracts per month, productivity that Johnson credits to building a strong relationship with SPS’s sales force.

“I spend a lot of time educating our sales team about our contract terms and conditions and redrafting our forms so they are at our ending position,” Johnson said. “They get to see that I know the business.”

Besides overseeing a plethora of sales contracts each month, Johnson has shepherded nine corporate acquisitions for SPS Commerce, including its purchases of Mapadoc in 2019 and EDIAdmin in 2018.

Before joining SPS Commerce, Johnson was, among other things, chief legal officer at Merrill Corp., principal attorney at MTS Systems Corp. and general counsel at Xio-tech Corp. Johnson’s resume also includes being a law clerk at Mesaba Aviation. Before joining the legal profession, he was a commercial pilot.

—Scott Carlson





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PUBLIC COMPANY

Stephen Lee

Target Corp.

Last December, Stephen Lee, assistant general counsel for intellectual property at Target Corp., went to Washington, D.C., and testified in front of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee for Intellectual Property about the flood of fraudulent foreign trademarks into the U.S. trademark application system.

Lee was invited to testify because of the work that he and his team did to uncover the extent of the problem. In the last 18 months, Target introduced 30 plus new owned brands. Typically, brand development takes 12 to 18 months, but they were completing the brand development process in one-third of the time.

The ability to secure trademarks quickly was critical. But Lee's team discovered that fraudulent trademarks were effectively blocking their efforts. In 2018, Target was the leading filer of trademarks,

but the fraud is so pervasive that in 2019, Target was supplanted by a foreign company that filed 635 bogus brands in one month alone.

Lee said that the fraudulent marks make an IP attorney's work like walking through a minefield. "We're running up against these things in every trademark search we do," he said. "Where it is a problem for Target, it could be devastating for a smaller business. We took up this issue in part for Target, but in part for the whole industry."

For Lee, who joined Target 17 years ago as a copyright and design attorney and grew to lead a 20-person IP team that he built, appearing before the Senate was a career-capping moment. "To think I'm not just complying with the law, I have the opportunity to help shape the law and advocate and remedy a massive fraud that is going on in the system," said Lee.

—Julie Swiler



PUBLIC COMPANY

Sandra Nowak

3M Co.

Medicine or law? Before committing to a career, Sandra Nowak interned at emergency rooms and law firms. She found her path at the intersection of both: intellectual property law.

Today, after 15 years at 3M, she's chief IP counsel for its Consumer Business Group, which produces familiar 3M products like Scotch-Brite sponges and Post-it notes. Nowak leads the attorneys who handle its patent filings, litigation, licensing, copyrights, and other IP work.

Nowak has helped streamline the group's patent protection processes. "Often consumer businesses want to invent or mock up multiple possibilities and do consumer testing before they commit to one or more," she said. "We've come up with ways to do patent filings for all the options so they're protected while 3M does that consumer testing."

Nowak also helped come up with a patent strategy for a deep learning software development team. Software development can be quite rapid, but software patentability varies widely around the world. "We've partnered with outside experts to get patents filed quickly and protect technology in as many countries as possible," she said.

Nowak advocates for greater diversity in innovation through organizations like the Intellectual Property Owners Association because she believes it leads to better innovation. She testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee's IP Subcommittee last year, noting that a U.S. Patent and Trademark Office report had shown that if people of other races, genders, and income levels innovated at similar rates as affluent white men, the impact would be profound. "The GDP of the country would quadruple," she said.

—Holly Dolezalek





PUBLIC COMPANY

Marianne Short

UnitedHealth Group

Although some areas of the law can be adversarial, being an in-house counsel lends itself to collaboration with those who hold the same role at other companies. That’s never been on display more than right now during a pandemic, said UnitedHealth Group Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer Marianne Short.

From the start of the coronavirus situation, Short began contacting in-house counsels at other health care organizations, and by mid-March, those had turned into daily conference calls.

“We absolutely have to all work together, not just for our own members and employees, but as a larger community,” said Short. “In-house counsels can play a major part in navigating through a crisis like this and looking for answers. Connecting with each other helps us stay true to our mission to do good work.”

Short certainly has the background to be a leader.

From 1988 to 2000, she was a judge on the Minnesota Court of Appeals, authoring more than 900 opinions in both civil and criminal law, before going into private practice.

After leaving her position as managing partner at Dorsy & Whitney, Short joined UnitedHealth in 2013 and quickly developed a larger legal organization within the \$200 billion company. Her department has effectively managed litigation, regulatory disputes, and numerous acquisitions.

She brings that experience and accomplishments into play to help UnitedHealth, its members, and the entire health community during this incredibly turbulent time.

“Our focus on health has always been meaningful to me,” she said. “I feel fortunate to be part of a community that comes together and works together for our future.”

—Elizabeth Millard

PUBLIC COMPANY

James Watts

Enbridge Inc.

Named managing legal counsel in 2017, Watts has balanced permitting the Line 3 Replacement Project — the longest regulatory case in recent Minnesota history — while supporting the management and guidance of Enbridge Inc.’s Minnesota-based Law Department.

Hired in 2008, Watts has worked in various legal roles across Enbridge’s business units in New York, Michigan, Illinois, Montana and parts in between. Watts said each of those assignments prepared him for the once-in-a-lifetime Line 3 replacement project by exposing him to different business issues and stakeholders.

As in-house counsel, Watts has attended dozens of town halls, public hearings and heard from witnesses expressing concerns and support of the pipeline. He’s explored the many legal issues in the case.

“I think it’s important work,” he said. “I like being

able to have one foot in both the public and regulatory worlds.”

Beyond Line 3, Watts focuses on the law department’s three tenets: Caring, Learning, and Results.

“We’re focused on developing our people, and we keep it simple. We support our people’s interests, we give them learning opportunities, and we put them in positions to succeed. That’s our job as leaders.”

Outside of work, Watts co-chairs Enbridge’s annual hockey game benefiting the Northland’s Boys & Girls Club. Along with his wife, Kiki, Watts is director of the local youth soccer association. Theater, too, is a family affair, with Kiki recently named a Duluth Playhouse board member and their three daughters active in productions. “We value our community,” he said.

—Frank Jossi



RISING STAR

Ben Klocke

Bridgewater Bank

The world of finance has been a longtime interest for Ben Klocke, the son of a banker in Mason City, Iowa. After earning an undergrad degree in finance and graduating from the University of Iowa law school in 2007, Klocke worked for three law firms in Omaha, Nebraska, before moving to the Twin Cities in 2013. He joined Bloomington-based Bridgewater Bank as general counsel three years ago.

As general counsel, Klocke has helped guide one of the fastest growing banks in Minnesota, playing a key role in the bank’s move from a private entity into the public market in 2018. In the bank’s first year as a publicly traded company, he was tasked with creating the governance structures, educating the board, implementing robust investor relations processes and partnering with outside counsel. He assisted with the bank’s first 10K filing, initial virtual shareholder meeting, several

insider trades and meeting all of the SEC-mandated filings.

“It was a new area of the law to me, so it was a challenge to quickly become more up to speed on corporate and securities law matters, and managing communications between us and our ‘outside’ counsel,” Klocke said. “We need to look at issues from three different perspectives – legal, business and regulators – how they will view our material decisions.”

He’s also currently involved in developing Bridgewater Bank’s new corporate campus, partnering with regulatory agencies, negotiating leases, creating vendor contracts and resolving issues with contractors and government agencies.

He enjoys the variety of his work. “There is a broad spectrum of legal issues we face on a day-to-day basis, and we get to work with an incredibly talented leadership team.”

–Dan Emerson



PUBLIC COMPANY

Amanda Parker Rusin

Regis Corp.

Amanda Rusin has been busy the past two years as Regis Corp.’s senior vice president and general counsel. The company is going through a dramatic multi-year transformation that fundamentally changes the way it does business.

Regis started the transformation process over two years ago by closing unprofitable salons and divesting of non-core assets. By the end of the year, the company will have converted nearly all of its corporate-owned salons to its franchisees, she said, and increased its focus on Regis-owned proprietary label haircare brands.

“We were the largest owner and operator of salons in North America and now we’re the largest franchisor of those salons,” Rusin said. “That is a dramatic change in how we do business and the services we provide to our franchisees. That is the story of Regis that I’m proud to be a part of.”

Rusin began her legal

career in private practice at Briggs & Morgan before embarking on a series of corporate counsel and business positions at Cargill Inc. and Polaris Industries. The executive position offered her a rare opportunity to handle legal work mixed with more traditional business function roles such as Regis’s procurement division, which serves its more than 7,000 salons, real estate, internal audit, and risk and insurance divisions.

“Once you reach the C-suite you’re a corporate executive first and a lawyer second,” Rusin said. “It’s been fun to follow this route.”

The general counsel and her staff of 35 legal professionals work with students from local law schools during their externships. She also volunteers as a supervising attorney at the University of Minnesota’s Business Law Clinic. “Doing is the best way for our students to learn,” she said.

–Frank Jossi



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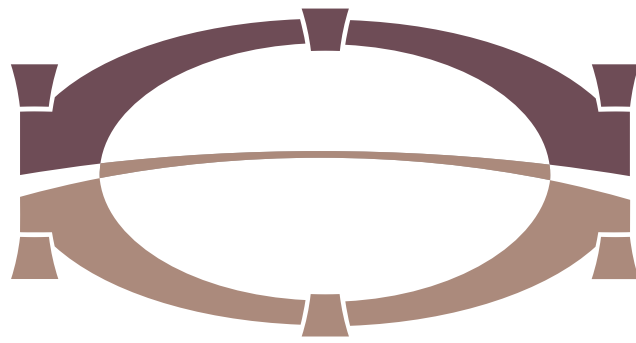
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BRIDGEWATER BANK

Congratulations, Ben Klocke!

2020 In-House Counsel Honoree
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Bridgewater Bank is proud to recognize Ben Klocke as a 2020 In-House Counsel Honoree. His high attention to detail, accuracy and dedication make him a true asset to the Bank. Congratulations, Ben, on your well-deserved accomplishment!



Ben Klocke
Senior Vice President
General Counsel