

New Hires, Promotions, Partners

Abby Churchill, U.W. 2015, has joined Haskins, Main & Devine LLC, Monona. Her practice focuses on estate planning, elder law, probate, guardianships, and special needs planning. She previously worked at an insurance company and in private practice.

Lee Hurwitz, Univ. of Illinois Chicago 2012, has joined Baker Sterchi as a member in the Belleville office. He is based in the Chicago area and regularly practices in courts throughout the region. Hurwitz concentrates his practice on toxic tort, product liability, premises liability, and trucking matters; has extensive experience handling insurance defense cases involving personal injury and subrogation claims; and has prepared numerous cases for jury trial, serving as solo lead counsel in nearly a dozen verdicts.



Colleen Boyle Matter, Marquette 2013, has been promoted to Vice President, Wisconsin State Manager of First American

Title Insurance Co., National Commercial Services Division, a subsidiary of First American Financial Corp. One of the largest title insurers in the nation, the company offers title services through its direct operations and an extensive network of agents throughout the United States and abroad.



ROHDE



SIEGEL

Two attorneys have joined the Milwaukee office of

Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren s.c.

Emilie Rohde, Marquette 2023 magna cum laude, is with the Corporate Law Practice. She advises clients on a broad range of corporate and transactional matters, including entity formation, internal management and brand development, private equity, and mergers and acquisitions.

Charlotte Siegel, Univ. of Southern California 2024, is with the Real Estate Practice. She advises clients on all aspects of commercial real estate, including acquisitions, dispositions, financings, and joint ventures, and brings a pragmatic, solutions-oriented approach to each matter.



Matthew J. Van Keulen, U.W. 2011 cum laude, has joined the Madison office of von Briesen & Roper s.c. and is a shareholder

in the Insurance Coverage and Risk Management Section. He focuses his practice on a wide range of coverage issues and draws on his years of experience in private practice and over a decade as a senior litigation attorney for a large insurer. Van Keulen is an adjunct professor at the UW Law School where he teaches courses on litigation and coaches the mock trial competition teams. Thor C. Jeppson has joined the firm as a land use and development advisor working with the Real Estate and Government Law groups.

Mergers, Relocations, New Offices

Vincent L. Hein, Marquette 2009, has opened **Hein Law Offices LLC**, 101 S. Main Street, Fort Atkinson, focusing on elder law, Medicaid crisis planning, trusts and estates, Social Security disability, and trust and estate litigation. Hein Law Offices serves clients – individuals and families facing complex legal challenges, from planning for long-term care to resolving disputes and securing benefits – throughout Wisconsin with a focus on protecting assets, preserving dignity, and delivering practical solutions.

The Wisconsin State Public Defenders Office (SPD) and the UW Law School have partnered to strengthen the law school's Public Defender Project, which has been preparing aspiring attorneys for roles in public defense since 1991. **Will Rakestraw**, Marquette 2010, and **Brianna Zawada**, U.W. 2019, assistant state public defenders in the SPD's Madison Trial Office, will begin teaching the program this spring as adjunct professors. The program will maintain its current form through the end of the 2025-2026 school year, at which point SPD and UW Law plan to roll out changes that will offer students greater opportunities to gain experience representing clients. These new offerings will include an academic-year experiential learning component to enable aspiring criminal defense attorneys to work on SPD cases. The redesigned Public Defender Project will continue to place law students in summer internships at SPD offices across Wisconsin.

Rakestraw has taught as an adjunct professor at Marquette's Public Defender

Clinic, supervised interns, mentored new attorneys, and served as an instructor in SPD's Trial Skills Academy. Zawada has trained SPD attorneys and support staff through the agency's Trial Skills Academy and Defense Team Basics program.

Appointments, Elections



Elizabeth Elving, Marquette 2020, has been named to the boards of Next Act Theatre Inc. and The Cathedral Center,

two Milwaukee nonprofit organizations. She will be serving three-year terms for both organizations. Next Act Theatre is a performing arts institution, producing compelling stage works with the goal of engaging and inspiring audiences. The Cathedral Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering women and families facing housing crises through emergency shelter, supportive services, and long-term stability programs. Elving is an attorney in the Litigation Practice at Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren s.c., Milwaukee, and represents clients in matters including environmental, intellectual property, and complex commercial disputes. She is also a member of Reinhart's PFAS and Artificial Intelligence teams.



Nathan Wautier, U.W. 2003, has been named the managing shareholder of the Madison office of Reinhart Boerner Van

Deuren s.c. He is a member of the Real Estate, Corporate Law, and Banking and Finance practices and co-chair of the Data Centers Group. He has a nationwide practice concentrating in real estate-related purchase, sale, development, financing, and other matters. Wautier also has been appointed to the Wisconsin Housing Preservation Corp. (WHPC) board. His term on the board continues through July 1, 2031. The WHPC's mission is to preserve, provide, and protect affordable housing for low- and moderate-income Wisconsinites.

Authors, Speakers

Authors of the recently revised *Eckhardt's Workbook for Wisconsin Estate Planners* (State Bar of Wis. 8th ed. 2025) are the following: **Joseph W.**

Bukowski, Marquette 2018, and **Bradley J. Kalscheur**, U.W. 1995, Michael Best & Friedrich LLP, Milwaukee; **Sheila Booth-**

by **Stevens**, Iowa 1995, Michael Best & Friedrich LLP, Madison; **Mark H. T. Fuhrman**, U.W. 1993, Fuhrman + Dodge S.C., Middleton, and **Kelly J. Stohr**, U.W. 2004, Bell, Moore & Richter S.C., Madison (formerly of Fuhrman + Dodge S.C., Middleton); **Jeff A. Goldman**, U.W. 2002, DeWitt LLP, Madison; **Steven E. Grimm**, U.W. 1997, Axley Brynson LLP, Madison; **Amy J. Krier**, U.W. 2003, and **Aleina L. McGettrick**, Marquette 2021, Certus Legal Group Ltd., Milwaukee; **Nicole M. Perozzi**, Marquette 2020, Jesson & Rains PLLC, Charlotte, N.C.; **Caitlyn B. Sikorski**, DePaul 2007, Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren s.c., Milwaukee; **Kelly M. Spott**, Marquette 2013, O'Neil, Cannon, Hollman, DeJong & Laing S.C., Milwaukee; **Thomas S. Vercauteren**, U.W. 2009, and **David P. Weller**, U.W. 1997, Boardman Clark LLP, Madison; **Peter J. Wyant**, U.W. 2011, Wyant Law Offices S.C., Racine; and **Gina C. Ziegelbauer**, Marquette 2012, Steimle Birschbach LLC, Sheboygan and Manitowoc.

Susan Kaplan, U.W. 1991, has authored *A Healthy Union: How States Can Lead on Environmental Health* (Island Press 2025). The book describes how and why environmental health protections eroded at the federal level and explores groundbreaking state environmental health policies across the country and political spectrum, from advancing environmental justice in California to reducing pesticide use in Texas to expanding environmental health education in New York. It identifies key elements shared by successful policies and best practices that policymakers and advocates in any state can use to protect their community from pollution and toxic chemicals.

Awards, Degrees, Honors



The Wisconsin Association for Justice (WAJ) has named **Benjamin S. Wagner**, U.W. 2003, as the 2025 Robert L. Habush Trial Lawyer of the Year. The award, established in 2000, recognizes Wisconsin attorneys who make significant contributions to the trial bar through precedent-setting litigation or exceptional service to the legal community. Wagner earned the honor for securing justice for an 89-year-old woman and her family; the woman, an assisted-living facility resident, died after being left outside for hours. Wagner's work exposed

systemic failures at the facility, leading a Kenosha County jury to issue a rare, multiple seven-figure punitive-damages verdict – believed to be the first of its kind in Wisconsin for elder neglect under current law. Wagner is with Habush Habush & Rottier S.C., Milwaukee.

In Memoriam

Louis Andrew Jr., Marquette 1966, Milwaukee, May 6, 1941 – Nov. 4, 2025.

John P. Arakelian, U.W. 1962, Milwaukee, June 7, 1936 – May 7, 2025.

Sheldon B. Bankier, U.W. 1973, Mequon, Sept. 6, 1945 – March 6, 2025.

Robert J. Bonner, Marquette 1963, Milwaukee, Jan. 8, 1939 – Sept. 10, 2024.

Charles M. Bye, Valparaiso 1969, Hudson, Jan. 25, 1944 – April 26, 2025.

Patrick J. Fleis, Marquette 2003, Milwaukee, March 27, 1973 – Nov. 5, 2025.

John P. Kirby Jr., Notre Dame 1967, Clayton, Mo., Aug. 11, 1938 – Aug. 5, 2025.

Lisa A. Martin-Tezak, Marquette 1999, Milwaukee, Sept. 22, 1961 – Nov. 14, 2025.

Peter F. McNamee, Marquette 1954, Bloomington, Ill., Oct. 13, 1927 – Nov. 9, 2025.

William F. Nelson, U.W. 1960, Madison, July 6, 1935 – Feb. 26, 2025.

Anthony David Russomanno, Illinois 2008, Madison, Jan. 22, 1979 – March 16, 2025.

William G. Schmus, Marquette 1973, Lakewood Ranch, Fla., Jan. 9, 1949 – Dec. 13, 2024.

Francis U. Seroogy, Marquette 1959, Tomahawk, Oct. 12, 1933 – Oct. 25, 2025.

Ronald C. Shikora, Marquette 1967, Brookfield, Jan. 24, 1943 – March 31, 2025. **WL**

How to Place your Announcement

If you have moved, become a partner or an associate, or received a promotion or an award, let us know!

Notices about State Bar members in good standing are printed as space is available, and at no cost, must be submitted in writing, and may be edited. Questions? Email MembersOnly@wisbar.org, or call (800) 444-9404, ext. 6127, or (608) 250-6127.

Ineligible announcements: Talks, speeches (unless they are of national stature), honors from other publications (including "Best of...", "Rising star...", and other lists), and political announcements are not accepted as announcements.

Photo placement: Submit a professional-quality photo with your announcement. If the photo is used, the State Bar will issue an invoice for \$35 per photo. Please acknowledge the photo placement fee in your submission. Group photos and photos copied from websites are not accepted. High-resolution electronic photos are preferred to ensure high-quality production. Images should be sized at least 4"x6", with a resolution no less than 150 dpi, although 300 dpi is preferred. Print photos will not be returned.

Deadline: Submit announcements by the first of the month preceding publication. For example, to place an announcement in the March issue, it must be received before February 1. Email to: MembersOnly@wisbar.org. Include your State Bar membership number. **WL**



Honor your colleague's memory...

with a donation to the
Wisconsin Law Foundation



**WISCONSIN
LAW FOUNDATION**
Charitable Arm of the State Bar of Wisconsin

www.wisbar.org/wlf