

GRAVES GARRETT NEWS

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GRAVES HANDLES LEGAL MATTERS WITH CONTESTED KANSAS GOVERNOR'S RACE

Kansas Gov. Jeff Colyer's campaign team hired Graves Garrett partner Todd Graves to work on a highly publicized and contested election matter.



Todd Graves

Graves provided legal counsel in the review and recount process of the Republican primary for Kansas governor earlier this month. Colyer trailed by a slim margin in the days after the Tuesday, Aug. 7, voting before eventually conceding a week later in what has been called the tightest primary in state history.

Both the Kansas City Star and Wall Street Journal highlighted Graves' involvement in the process.

"I received a call early the morning after the election,"

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Alexander takes unique path to legal career

The phone rings, and the conversation for this article about Andrew Alexander's life pauses.

A client call takes priority, and Alexander's focus changes to deal with the matter at hand. This perfectly represents his ability to shift gears and adapt — a trait fully on display during a 14-year nontraditional odyssey from a small town in central Kansas to a Juris Doctor from University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law.

Before joining Graves Garrett in January 2017, Alexander studied biology, aviation and theology and gained practical and professional experience in vehicle maintenance, management, and handcrafting stringed instruments — all before returning to school to become a lawyer.

"Through all the detours, I always knew I had a high likelihood of returning to education to do something more sophisticated and intellectually

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ALEXANDER TAKES UNIQUE PATH TO LEGAL CAREER

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stimulating," Alexander said. "I'm a person of faith, and at each of these unique turns in my life, I was just doing my best to listen to God and do what He wanted me to do. When you're doing that and the road turns, at times it can seem strange — and the sequence can seem like a non sequitur.



Andrew Alexander

"Once you get through a few of those sequences, you can look back and see, 'I'm being built into a specific character.'"

Alexander grew up outside of Inman, Kansas — a town of fewer than 1,500 people diagonally situated between the larger cities of Hutchinson and McPherson — developing a love for engines and becoming a bit of a self-described "gear head." Yet, he always envisioned working as either a physician or an engineer, and he initially chose to study pre-med biology at Kansas State University.

However, Alexander made a switch after just one semester and opted to study under his older brother in airway science at the school's Salina (Kansas) campus. There, he earned private and instrument pilot ratings and was about five hours short of his commercial pilot certification, only to have the tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001, again prompt a change in direction.

That next change began while Alexander was still at Kansas State University, and was the result of some complicated work he performed on one of his own motorcycles. A motorcycle shop in Hesston, Kansas, offered him a job that he accepted, leading to work as a department manager, helping make the outfit the largest Arctic Cat ATV dealer in the world.

Alexander gained valuable knowledge in accounting, budgeting and employee management, and he later worked at a couple of other dealerships.

"This was my interruption from formal education," he said.

During his stints in the motorsports industry, Alexander also went back to school — this time remotely studying theology with Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. Mondays were spent on coursework, while he managed or worked in the shop Tuesday through Saturday.

"I eventually decided that I was not designed for ministry," he joked. "I probably would've been pretty good as a teaching pastor, but I would've put a lot of people to sleep."

The next change didn't come so naturally.

“Once you get through a few of those sequences, you can look back and see, ‘I’m being built into a specific character.’”

Alexander "retired" from the motorcycle industry, and he tried his hand at web programming and working as a luthier, the formal name for a person who designs and crafts stringed instruments. The prior challenged his ability to start a business of his own, and the latter proved a cost-prohibitive industry for a startup to break into.

At this time, a friend suggested law school, and Alexander considered whether being a lawyer might actually fit his skillset.

"I maybe thought about it a couple of times when I was very young," Alexander said, while acknowledging the idea of being an attorney never really registered with him. "I did a little research and realized, 'That might be exactly what I should do.'"

Alexander then finished his undergraduate at Moody with a Bachelor of Science in Biblical Studies — an analytical theology degree focusing on textual criticism and hermeneutics — before going to law school at UMKC. After law school,

he clerked for a federal judge, worked on a contractual basis for a North Carolina law firm, started his own small business litigation practice, and then landed at Graves Garrett — a place where he feels at home.

"The people, first of all," Alexander said of what makes Graves Garrett special. "I know that it's very important to have quality people around and above you and to learn from people who are excellent at their craft and are good teachers."

As Alexander accepted the client phone call at his desk, just a hint of grime and motor grease was visible under his fingernails — remnants from a weekend working on his endurance race car. It is one of the many eclectic hobbies he still finds time to pursue.

Although he hasn't flown in years, Alexander would still like to obtain his commercial pilot license, and he still plays the guitar — both in a church band and the occasional impromptu session with his brothers. There are even a few unfinished guitars at home that will one day be completed when time allows.

"Looking in hindsight at the journey, each of those different twists and turns and stops was an extremely important tool for building skills and character to start turning me into the person that I'm going to be," Alexander said. "Everybody gets those in life. That's just how it worked out for me." ■

GRAVES HANDLES LEGAL MATTERS WITH CONTESTED KANSAS GOVERNOR'S RACE

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Graves said. "This was an extremely competitive race that deserved legal scrutiny, and I'm pleased to have Graves Garrett viewed as a preeminent source to provide counsel in controversial election matters. Our firm strives to be a respected resource in this unique sector of law, and we believe this is another example of our ability to navigate difficult political situations." ■

ABA CRIMINAL LITIGATION COMMITTEE NAMES TOMPKINS CRYPTOCURRENCY SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR

Graves Garrett attorney Benjamin Tompkins will serve as subcommittee chair for Cryptocurrency on the Criminal Litigation Committee of the American Bar Association's Litigation Section. He was appointed to a 2018-19 term, which started last week.

"I'm honored to accept this position and start work with a new subcommittee for the Criminal Litigation Committee," Tompkins said. "This is a unique opportunity to work on emerging issues related to cryptocurrencies, especially as they relate to criminal investigations and prosecutions."



Benjamin Tompkins

The Criminal Litigation Committee of the ABA is "concerned with the defense and prosecution of all criminal matters, including all state and federal crimes as well as complex white-collar cases and regulatory enforcement matters." The committee works on a wide variety of substantive fields, including "procurement fraud, banking offenses, tax fraud, securities offenses, economic crimes, official corruption" and others. Procedural areas include "grand-jury reform, government investigative procedures, guideline sentencing, criminal procedural rules, evidentiary issues and the training of defense lawyers and prosecutors." ■

THREE ATTORNEYS SPEAK AT RNLA NATIONAL ELECTION LAW SEMINAR

Three attorneys from Graves Garrett were featured speakers at the Republican National Lawyers Association's 2018 National Election Law Seminar held last month in St. Louis, Missouri. Founding partner Todd Graves moderated a panel, while partner Eddie Greim and associate Alan Simpson delivered a presentation during the two-day event.



Todd Graves



Eddie Greim



Alan Simpson

As the principal national organization of Republican lawyers, the RNLA has a targeted set of missions, including advancing professionalism; open, fair and honest elections; career opportunities; and Republican ideals.

Graves, the chair of the Missouri Republican party, served as moderator for a panel discussion on The First Amendment of Politics, which included insight on employee speech, public officials on social media, and donor disclosure to the IRS. Greim and Simpson delivered a presentation on Missouri election law as it relates to campaign finance, a state redistricting initiative and the Missouri Ethics Commission.

"This was a great opportunity for our attorneys to display their unique insight into election law," Graves said. "I'd like to thank the Republican National Lawyers Association for putting on such a great conference and for allowing us to participate in the programming." ■

THREE ATTORNEYS MAKE REPEAT APPEARANCES IN THE BEST LAWYERS IN AMERICA®

Graves Garrett is pleased to announce three partners have again been recognized for their legal work in The Best Lawyers in America® 2019, a U.S. News & World Report-sponsored peer review guide honoring legal professionals. Todd Graves made the list for the ninth straight year, Nathan Garrett for the fifth straight year and Eddie Greim for the second straight year.



Nathan Garrett

Recognition by Best Lawyers is based entirely on peer review. The organization's methodology is "designed to capture, as accurately as possible, the consensus opinion of leading lawyers about the professional abilities of their colleagues within the same geographical area and legal practice area."

A person receives recognition from Best Lawyers for his or her talent in the legal industry. Graves and Garrett were both honored in three categories, while Greim earned distinction in one.

A 2016 Lawyer of the Year honoree, Graves represents clients nationwide before federal and state courts and administrative agencies. His areas of experience include white-collar criminal defense, political speech and election law, internal investigations, regulatory compliance, and complex commercial litigation.

Garrett was named the 2018 Lawyer of the Year. His practice focuses on federal civil and criminal investigations, complex commercial litigation and False Claims Act (qui tam) prosecution and defense.

Greim's practice includes free speech and election law, internal investigations, and complex litigation, and he has become a "go-to" lawyer on policy and constitutional issues. ■



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HUNKINS ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN THINKING BIGGER BUSINESS MAGAZINE

Thinking Bigger Business magazine recently published an article from Graves Garrett attorney Garrett Hunkins on the impact of the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Epic Systems Corp. v. Lewis*.

The decision dealt with the enforceability of certain arbitration agreements in federal court. In a 5-4 decision, the Court held that under the Federal Arbitration Act, agreements providing for individualized arbitration proceedings are enforceable.

In the article, Hunkins explains the importance of the ruling and the benefits it offers to employers. He further provided insight on how arbitration agreements can help businesses reduce risks associated with class action litigation as well as lower overall legal costs.

Hunkins is an associate at Graves Garrett and supports the firm's Commercial and Business Litigation, White Collar Criminal Defense, and Free Speech & Election Law practice groups. He focuses his practice on complex litigation involving both corporate and political clients. ■

FISHER SELECTED TO TEACH NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TRIAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM

The National Institute of Trial Advocacy (NITA) selected Graves Garrett partner Kathleen Fisher to teach a program on deposition skills. She instructed a group of lawyers in August on the campus of the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

NITA is the nation's leading provider of legal advocacy skills training. A 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization based in Boulder, Colorado, NITA pioneered the legal skills learning-by-doing methodology over 40 years ago and has since remained the ultimate standard in continuing legal education.

Retired Missouri State Judge Charles Atwell asked Fisher to teach the program on depositions with a group of experienced litigators and state and federal judges. The three-day course is designed around simulated deposition settings with constructive faculty critique.

"I was honored to have Judge Atwell come to me with this opportunity, and I thank NITA for allowing me to participate," Fisher said. "I truly enjoyed this experience and the chance to share practical knowledge with other lawyers in an attempt to help them improve deposition and litigation skills."

Fisher has extensive courtroom experience from her time as a prosecutor and her 10 years in private practice with Graves Garrett. Her practice focuses on defense of civil, criminal and regulatory investigations, as well as qui tam claims and False Claims Act/healthcare cases. She has experience representing individuals and businesses in a variety of complex government investigations, including healthcare fraud, civil and criminal tax matters, civil and criminal forfeitures, FDIC and SEC violations, environmental violations, mail fraud, wire fraud, and other financial and white-collar crime cases. ■



Kathleen Fisher