

GRAVES GARRETT NEWS

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Kruger finds her calling in legal industry, embraces challenges of paralegal role

With only a handful of college credits banked, Nichole Kruger entered the legal profession in an entry-level position in a high-profile environment.

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Missouri turned out to be the right place at the right time for the Olathe, Kansas, native. She quickly identified a passion for her work, connected with current co-workers Todd Graves and Nathan Garrett, and started a unique path toward earning a paralegal degree.

Kruger currently serves as a paralegal at Graves Garrett — a job she knows is right for her.

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PLATTE COUNTY PREVAILS IN LAWSUIT AGAINST ZONA ROSA BOND TRUSTEE

In late May, Platte County Circuit Court Judge James Van Amburg issued a decision granting summary judgment in favor of Platte County in its declaratory judgment action against UMB Bank, N.A., the Trustee for the Zona Rosa bonds. Graves Garrett provided legal representation to Platte County throughout the process.

In its order, the court rejected the trustee's demand for Platte County to pay shortfalls on the Zona Rosa bonds in 2018 and each year thereafter. This demand would have imposed on Platte County an immediate liability of \$765,390.95 and a long-term liability of up to \$40 million through 2032.

The court agreed with Platte County's position, finding that Platte County never agreed to make any payments to cover shortfalls for the Zona Rosa Bonds.

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GREIM HONORED IN 2019 SIGNIFICANT SIG AWARD CLASS

Graves Garrett partner Eddie Greim was a recipient of the 2019 Significant Sig Award, given to Sigma Chi fraternity alumni who have achieved high levels of professional success.



Eddie Greim

Sigma Chi recently honored the 139 recipients at the 82nd Grand Chapter in Salt Lake City, Utah. The fraternity has recognized more than 1,800 with the Significant Sig Award, which has been awarded annually since 1935.

Greim was a member of the Xi Xi Chapter of Sigma Chi while earning bachelor's degrees in economics and political science from the University of Missouri, where he graduated summa cum laude in 1999. He went on to earn his Juris Doctor from Harvard Law School.

Greim focuses his practice on free speech and election law, complex commercial litigation, internal investigations and whistleblower claims — becoming a “go-to” lawyer on policy and constitutional issues.

Greim was joined in the 2019 Significant Sig class by five members of the United States Congress, Chicago Bears general manager Ryan Pace, best-selling author Michael Connelly, and Kansas City attorney and Mizzou alum Jim Polsinelli. Previous winners include late-night talk show host David Letterman (Ball State, 1969), country music artist Luke Bryan (Georgia Southern, 1999) and Academy Award-winning actor and director Warren Beatty (Northwestern, 1959).

Greim's experience includes numerous constitutional challenges to election and campaign finance laws; representation of clients in state and federal ethics and campaign finance enforcement actions and investigations; initiative petition drafting and litigation; and litigation and advice regarding First Amendment protections for petition circulation. ■

KRUGER FINDS HER CALLING IN LEGAL INDUSTRY, EMBRACES CHALLENGES OF PARALEGAL ROLE

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“There's a plan out there that I don't know about, and I'm just following the plan,” Kruger said. “I may not know where it's going to end, but the journey's been great. I've been very lucky, and I couldn't be happier with where I'm at with Graves Garrett. I can't imagine being anywhere else, honestly.”

Kruger joined Graves Garrett in January 2009, having previously built a relationship with the firm name partners during her six-year stint with the U.S. Department of Justice. She worked for the U.S. Attorney's Office in Kansas City when Graves was appointed to the post of U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Missouri and during Garrett's tenure there.

After attending Wichita State University for a few semesters, Kruger had come home and took a job interview at the U.S. Attorney's Office, where her mother had worked and helped to push her in the door. She started in the administration unit, handling time entry for the office, coordinating travel schedules, and the like.

Kruger then branched into the Victim/Witness Assistance Unit and found the direct involvement with people and their cases rewarding. A chance to move into the law firm environment at Graves Garrett became the right opportunity to continue to build on that experience.

“When I got a call from Nathan asking to meet about a job opportunity at the firm, I knew this would be the right fit,” Kruger said. “It's been true ever since. This firm, the people, they treat you well.”

Kruger's diverse legal background gives her the opportunity to assist Graves Garrett in a variety of important ways. She started softly on paralegal work and eventually decided to return to college to earn certification.

In 2014, Kruger graduated from National American University with a bachelor's in paralegal science — all while receiving support and encouragement from firm leaders.

“I just decided to go to school and get my degree for what I really wanted to do and learn a little bit more about why I was doing what I was doing,” Kruger said.

Kruger learned on the job for more than a decade before formalizing her education, always eager to find the next challenge. She says each day at Graves Garrett provides unique circumstances that keep her on her toes. “I like being busy,” Kruger said. “I'm not somebody who can just sit here and wait for the work to come to me. I'm always looking to find the next task.”

Kruger recently was elected president of the Heartland Paralegal Association (HPA) and will serve in that role for the 2019-2020 term. She has been involved with the professional organization for more than three years, has been a voting member for two and recently finished up her 2018-2019 term as secretary.

The HPA is a not-for-profit professional organization dedicated to the advancement of the paralegal profession by promoting the benefits of effective and increased utilization of paralegals within the legal community.

“I am honored to have the chance to serve HPA in this role,” Kruger said. “The organization has been beneficial to my professional development, and I look forward to helping others achieve in that same regard.”

Kruger understands the importance of her involvement with HPA and how she can use the lessons of the journey that brought her to Graves Garrett. Provided a chance to start a career in legal, she now has the ability to help others forge their own fulfilling path in the industry. ■

U.S. SUPREME COURT DECLINES TO REVIEW AMENDMENT 2 RULING

The U.S. Supreme Court denied a petition for writ of certiorari in April in *Missouri Ethics Commission, et al. v. Free and Fair Election Fund, et al.*, ending two years of federal litigation related to Missouri's Amendment 2 — a sweeping overhaul of campaign finance restrictions.

Graves Garrett partner Eddie Greim argued on behalf of the Free and Fair Election Fund and five others in the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, which upheld a ruling from the United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri, where Greim tried the case. Both courts held that parts of Amendment 2 were unconstitutional.



Eddie Greim

The U.S. Supreme Court called for a response to the Missouri Ethics Commission's petition for certiorari, but ultimately decided it will not review the Eighth Circuit's decision.

Free and Fair Election Fund sued the Missouri Ethics Commission for a declaration that parts of Amendment 2 — Missouri's 2016 campaign finance reform — were unconstitutional. The Eighth Circuit affirmed the district court's order permanently enjoining enforcement of a provision of the Missouri Constitution, which prohibits a political action committee (PAC) from receiving contributions from other political action committees. The court ruled that this action unconstitutionally infringed on PACs' First Amendment rights to freedom of speech.

The ruling held that the amendment violated the First Amendment as applied to PACs, and that the state of Missouri did not have an obligation to prevent these types of contributions. ■

PLATTE COUNTY PREVAILS IN LAWSUIT AGAINST ZONA ROSA BOND TRUSTEE

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This issue has received both local and national media coverage, including an op-ed from Bloomberg titled, "Bondholders Should Never Think They're Above Taxpayers."

"The Platte County Commission's lawsuit has saved Platte County taxpayers tens of millions

of dollars," said Todd Graves, counsel for Platte County along with Dane Martin and Jennifer Donnelly. "The Court was correct to reject the Trustee's effort to impose a bondholder bailout on taxpayers. The Zona Rosa bonds will continue to be paid using the dedicated 1% sales tax in Zona Rosa, as has always been the case."

In its motion, Platte County sought a declaration from the court regarding the validity of the trustee's demand that it cover shortfalls for the Zona Rosa bonds. The Zona Rosa bonds were issued by a third-party entity, not Platte County, to finance parking garages in the Zona Rosa shopping center. Under the Financing Agreement, the bonds are payable from a 1% sales tax in Zona Rosa. ■



Dane Martin



Todd Graves

GARRETT, FISHER LEAD SESSION AT KCMBA'S ANNUAL BENCH-BAR & BOARDROOM CONFERENCE

Graves Garrett partners Nathan Garrett and Kathleen Fisher led a session last month on attorney-client privilege during the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association (KCMBA) Bench-Bar & Boardroom Conference in Branson, Missouri.



Nathan Garrett



Kathleen Fisher

The hourlong discussion — titled "Attorney Client Privilege and Big Brother: How and When the Government Can Drop In" — covered high-profile litigation in Kansas centered on conversations between an attorney and an inmate that were recorded and intercepted by the government without either party's knowledge. Garrett and Fisher covered situations where attorney-client privilege is waived when the participants lack a reasonable expectation of privacy in both a criminal and civil context.

Additionally, the presentation included information on an attorney's obligation to inform opposing counsel in the event of receiving attorney-client communications that were intended to be confidential.

Hundreds of Kansas City legal professionals attend the KCMBA's Bench-Bar & Boardroom Conference each year. The three-day event includes networking opportunities, up to 10 CLE hours and an awards dinner. ■



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RAITINGER EXPANDS HER PRACTICE, EARNS DATA PRIVACY CERTIFICATION

Graves Garrett is pleased to announce that associate attorney Callie Pippin Raitinger recently earned her Certified Information Privacy Professional credential for the U.S. Private Sector (CIPP/US) through the International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP). This certification recognizes that Raitinger demonstrated a strong foundation in U.S. private-sector privacy laws and regulations and an understanding of the legal requirements for the responsible transfer of sensitive personal data.

“Data Privacy and Information Security is an expansive universe of the law that touches on nearly every aspect of business these days, and it will only continue to become more relevant as more comprehensive federal laws are put

into place and as we, as a society, continue to digitize,” Raitinger said. “Obtaining this certification stresses the emphasis our firm puts on staying up to date with all aspects of an ever-changing legal landscape facing businesses. I look forward to adding value to Graves Garrett clients by helping them to obtain compliance with data-related laws and regulations, establish risk mitigation programs, and manage a data breach, should one occur; and in representing them in civil suits and government investigations related to data privacy and information security practices.”

Raitinger’s practice at Graves Garrett includes representing businesses in the defense of civil, criminal and regulatory investigations, along with counseling clients in matters of

corporate compliance. Her experience ranges from intellectual property and business disputes to contract law and employment-related matters.

She currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Association for Women Lawyers of Greater Kansas City, where she serves as Chair of the Awards & Scholarships Committee. She is also active in leadership positions within the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association, currently serving on the Wellness Committee as well as the Communications Advisory Committee. ■



Callie Pippin Raitinger