

GRAVES GARRETT NEWS

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MISSOURI SUPREME COURT REJECTS BID FOR ZONA ROSA BONDHOLDER BAILOUT

The Supreme Court of Missouri has denied a request by UMB Bank, N.A., the Trustee for the Zona Rosa Bonds, to file an appeal regarding its efforts to force Platte County to pay shortfalls on the Zona Rosa Bonds in 2018 and each year thereafter.

Platte County filed a lawsuit in 2018 after the Trustee threatened to sue unless Platte County paid to cover the shortfalls. The Zona Rosa Bonds were issued by a third-party entity, not Platte County, and are payable from a 1% sales tax in the Zona Rosa shopping district. The payments demanded by the Trustee would have escalated over time, totaling up to \$40 million through 2032. The

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Bodamer bolsters firm's commercial litigation with strong experience, respected reputation

Brad Bodamer sits behind his desk gazing out at the Kansas City skyline from his new office. Over his left shoulder sits a commemorative plaque featuring the bold headline from the September 24, 2012, edition of the *Kansas City Star*: "JURY: NO DECEPTION IN SELLING 'HOT FUEL,'" a visible reminder of one of the biggest wins in his legal career while he quietly ponders the opportunity ahead of him.

"We represented roughly 15 of the 150 refiners and retailers sued in 23 states, and this was the first case to be tried," Bodamer reflected on the 'Hot Fuel' litigation. "Shortly before trial, all but our three clients in the Kansas case settled. We tried and won the case against a fine group of local and national lawyers, which ultimately led to the voluntary dismissal of all our clients and the settlement of all the cases."

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BODAMER BOLSTERS FIRM'S COMMERCIAL LITIGATION PRACTICE

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"I've done a bit of everything so I'm truly a generalist in a specialized world," Brad continued. "But in the last several years, I've focused on general business litigation and class action trial work. I've appreciated the opportunity to try cases. I'm a courtroom lawyer. Selfishly, I'm at a point where I want to do what I enjoy, and I'm past the point of just needing to bill hours. I have gas left in the tank, and I want to expend that because I'm not ready to ride off into the sunset."

Brad joined Graves Garrett at the start of this year, bringing with him decades of legal experience and a well-earned reputation as a leading attorney not just in Kansas City but also throughout the Midwest. He bolsters a growing commercial litigation practice at the firm.

After spending his career in BigLaw, Brad jokingly but sincerely believes he finally found the type of place where he always wanted to be — Graves Garrett.

"I've had a good run in my career," he said. "I'm older, but I still have a lot of passion for my work. I know this will be a great place to continue my career."

Born and reared in Jefferson City, Brad didn't necessarily grow up with visions of being a lawyer. He gravitated toward football, first as all-state defensive end at Jefferson City High School under legendary coach Pete Adkins and later as a three-year starter at Southwest Missouri State University (now known as Missouri State).

Brad thought his undergraduate studies would be pre-med before he realized economics, philosophy and English had more appeal. He mentions a close family friend as the only attorney influence in his life, but after graduating with a degree in economics, Brad went to the University of Missouri for law school.

"We had a close and dear family friend who was a lawyer there in Jefferson City and was always kind of an idol so that's what exposed me to law — that and Perry Mason," Brad said. "I found my interests and decided to go to law school."

While in law school, Brad worked for the Court Administrator for the Missouri Supreme Court, and after graduating, he clerked for the Hon. Andrew Jackson Higgins of the Missouri Supreme Court.

When the time came to start his professional legal career, Brad initially considered St. Louis, more tied to that city for most of his life. He also thought about a small practice — preferably somewhere out west in the mountains of Colorado, Wyoming or Idaho.

The mountain country prospects didn't look great.

"I actually thought I wanted to be a small-town lawyer. I had just always enjoyed that part of the country," he recalled. "I wrote several letters, and one guy said I was welcome to come out on my own expense. He said, 'But we have three attorneys in town, and that's all we need.' So I moved on."

With that, Brad visited former classmates at Morrison & Hecker — now known as Stinson — about potential small firms in Kansas City, but eventually joined his fellow Mizzou law school graduates at one of Kansas City's "large" firms. He was the 45th attorney when he joined, and five years later, he was the 45th equity partner as the era of BigLaw began.

"I just felt Kansas City was a little more wide open than St. Louis," Brad said. "Morrison & Hecker, with 45 lawyers, seemed huge at the time. That just shows you how time changed and how quickly the firm grew in the first five years of my practice. I kind of fell into that."

Brad went on to achieve numerous notable outcomes on behalf of clients while at Morrison & Hecker, later Stinson, and most recently at Shook, Hardy & Bacon. This included the successful defense of the "Hot Fuel" class action trial memorialized on his desk plaque; the defense of a class action case against 12 Arkansas senior living communities accused of failure to provide promised care, which settled on the eve of trial; and the successful defense of an Arizona trial on behalf of the FSLIC on claims of false light invasion of

privacy arising out of public firings at The Phoenician. However, he also continued to be drawn to commercial litigation, arbitrations and trials, including contract and shareholder disputes, and wanted a place where he could truly focus on what mattered most to him at this point in his career.

Graves Garrett offered that opportunity, one he couldn't turn down after speaking with partner Nathan Garrett.

"I've known Nathan for years," Brad said. "I've known his reputation and the quality of Graves Garrett as a firm. I know how he approaches cases as a lawyer. I just knew this was the right fit."

"Brad is a top-level attorney in the city, and we're fortunate to have him become a part of the team," Nathan added. "Our firm continues to enhance its bench on commercial litigation and class action lawsuits, and this reinforces our commitment to handling high-level matters on a national level."

Brad will continue to focus on complex litigation matters, working with existing clients he has built a foundational relationship with over the years and cultivating new opportunities for Graves Garrett. Long ago committed to Kansas City, he has found his new professional home while maintaining devotion to his wife Lori (also a lawyer), six children and one grandchild.

The move to Graves Garrett reinforced his dedication to legal work, specifically his commercial litigation practice, but he remains faithful to balancing work and home life no matter where his career goes from here.

"I've been blessed to have many opportunities in my legal career," Brad said. "I intend to continue to look for those opportunities for as long as I still have a passion for the work I do."

As a postscript, having been with Graves Garrett less than three months, Brad already has prosecuted and won a virtual bench trial in a shareholder dispute on behalf of a longtime client. ■

GRAVES NAMED CHAIRMAN OF STANLEY M. HERZOG FOUNDATION

Graves Garrett is pleased to announce partner Todd Graves has been chosen as the Chairman for the newly founded Stanley M. Herzog Foundation, which will support the advancement and acceleration of nondenominational Christian education through a several-hundred-million-dollar endowment.

The Herzog Foundation's board will work with decision-makers and key opinion leaders in Christian education to create models of excellence. Initial efforts will focus within the state of Missouri, with quick expansion to regions throughout the country.

Graves will continue full time in his private practice at Graves Garrett while taking on the duties of guiding the Herzog Foundation.

"I look forward to honoring the commitment I made to my friend Stan to transform the landscape of Christian education through the unique value the Herzog Foundation will provide," Graves said. "I am grateful for this opportunity to help others grow through Christian education."

The Herzog Foundation's goals for the first 24 months include selecting an Executive Director to establish operational/internal procedures; developing and executing a Christian education "State of the Union" survey to gain insight into areas of excellence already in place; developing the Herzog Excellence Model to set parameters and ensure expectations are being met by all; and becoming recognized as a leader in nondenominational Christian education. ■

GRAVES, GARRETT NAMED TO MISSOURI LAWYERS WEEKLY'S INAUGURAL POWER 30 LIST FOR WHITE-COLLAR DEFENSE

Graves Garrett is pleased to announce name partners Todd Graves and Nathan Garrett were both honored as members of *Missouri Lawyers Weekly's* inaugural POWER 30 list for White-Collar Defense, which recognizes "the most powerful attorneys" in Missouri for this sector of law.

An independent panel selects the honorees deemed to be the best at defending clients from adverse government actions, including criminal prosecution and regulatory enforcements. The honorees were profiled in a recent edition of *Missouri Lawyers Weekly*.

"Todd Graves has built a reputation for representing conservative groups on the national stage, but his past experience as a U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Missouri also well-situates him to defend individuals facing white-collar investigations," the publication noted.

Garrett was highlighted as "the rare attorney who started his career in local law enforcement," describing his professional roots as a deputy juvenile officer and police officer in his hometown of West Plains and then detailing his career as an FBI agent and state and federal prosecutor, including stints in Dallas and Kansas City. ■



Todd Graves



Todd Graves



Nathan Garrett

RAITINGER AUTHORS KC COUNSELOR COVER STORY HIGHLIGHTING LOCAL LEGAL TRAILBLAZERS FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Graves Garrett attorney Callie Pippin Raitinger recently authored an article highlighting the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment's ratification,

which gave women the right to vote in United States elections. Her article, *Celebrating Trailblazers on the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment*, was the cover feature in the October edition of the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association's *KC Counselor* magazine.

Raitinger profiled landmark events and trailblazers in the Missouri and Kansas legal communities that contributed to "ushering in the social and cultural changes this nation needed for the 19th Amendment to finally succeed."

At Graves Garrett, Raitinger's practice 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 is also a Certified Information Privacy Professional (CIPP/US), a distinguished designation recognizing her command of U.S. Privacy Laws. Raitinger currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Association for Women Lawyers of Greater Kansas City, where she is the Vice Chair of the Women in the Profession Committee. She is also active in leadership positions within the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association, including currently serving as chair of the Well-Being Committee. ■



Callie Pippin Raitinger



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MISSOURI LAWYERS WEEKLY HONORS GREIM ON INAUGURAL POWER 30 LIST FOR APPELLATE LAW

Graves Garrett is pleased to announce partner Eddie Greim has been recognized as an inaugural member of *Missouri Lawyers Weekly's* POWER 30 list for Appellate Law, which recognizes "the most powerful attorneys" in Missouri for this sector of law.



Eddie Greim

An independent panel selects the honorees deemed to be the best at defending clients from adverse government actions, including criminal prosecution and regulatory enforcements. The honorees were profiled in a recent edition of *Missouri Lawyers Weekly*.

"When election-related litigation winds up in Missouri's appellate courts, chances are, Eddie Greim is involved in it," the publication noted.

Greim's practice at Graves Garrett focuses on free speech and election law, complex commercial litigation, internal investigations, and whistleblower claims. His free speech and election law experience has included 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; litigation and advice regarding First Amendment protections for petition circulation; representation of not-for-profit clients before state regulators; and advice on campaign and election law compliance. ■

MISSOURI SUPREME COURT REJECTS BID FOR ZONA ROSA BONDHOLDER BAILOUT

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estimated shortfall is currently over \$3.6 million. If paid by Platte County, the shortfalls would quickly deplete the county's \$4 million reserve fund and require either a material reduction in core governmental services or a raise in taxes.

The case continued to receive extensive national and regional coverage, including articles in *Bond Buyer* and the *Kansas City Business Journal*. In addition, Graves Garrett partners Todd Graves and Dane Martin were honored as Legal Champions in the 2021 Missouri Lawyers Awards for their work in representing Platte County. Legal Champion honors go to lawyers "not based on the size of verdicts, but the importance of the principle or policy at stake."

Graves and Martin were featured in a profile in a special section of *Missouri Lawyers Weekly* and recognized during a virtual ceremony Thursday, Feb. 11.

Platte County prevailed at both the trial court and the Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District. The trial court found that Platte County never promised to pay the shortfalls. The Court of Appeals agreed, finding that Platte County only promised "to consider whether to pay on the Zona Rosa Bonds" and "[i]t is undisputed that is exactly what the County did." The Trustee sought to appeal the decision to the Supreme Court of Missouri, which rejected the effort.

"This puts an end to the unfortunate effort by the Trustee to force Platte County into paying taxpayer funds to bondholders that it never agreed to pay at the outset," Graves said. ■