

Andrew P. Moratzka

Mackall, Crouse & Moore, P.L.C.

Born: April 16, 1977; Hastings, Minn.

Education: Lewis & Clark Law School, J.D., 2002; St. Olaf College, B.A., 1999

Employment: Mackall, Crouse & Moore, associate, 2002-present

Professional Associations: American Bankruptcy Institute, Minnesota State Bar Association

Community Activities: Friends of St. Olaf Skiing, Rotary Club of Minneapolis

Hobbies/Interests: Family, fishing, playing piano, skiing

Family: Wife, Anne Stephenson

When people see news about a local utility's rate hike, they often feel powerless to stop it. Not Andrew P. Moratzka, an energy law attorney with Mackall, Crouse & Moore in Minneapolis, who devotes a fair amount of his time to this type of complex litigation.

Moratzka represents large industrial energy consumers — such as iron mines, paper companies, refineries and steel manufacturers — when they negotiate energy costs. He also argues on their behalf before the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission when energy providers are seeking rate increases.

"I like this area of the law because I have to use my mathematics and economics backgrounds to understand whether the utility's justifications for a rate increase have any merit," Moratzka says, adding that rate cases have recently increased both in number and intensity.

Moratzka chose a career in law because "as a math major, I liked problem solving. Writing a brief is pretty much like solving a math problem, just in a different language," he says.

As a new law student, Moratzka says he thought about pursuing a career in environmental law, but quickly changed his focus after taking his first bankruptcy course. From then on, he took every Uniform Commercial Code class he could, and obtained a summer clerkship with TCF Bank in Minneapolis.

He began his current practice representing creditors and bankruptcy trustees in litigation. His fondest practice moment to date is arguing before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit, where last year he convinced the judges to reverse lower court decisions on a bankruptcy trustee standing issue.

Moratzka has recently begun gravitating toward energy law. He has not, however, completely exited the bankruptcy world, having built a solid reputation through his extensive involvement in bankruptcy-related bar endeavors.

He's been active in the Bankruptcy Law Section of the Minnesota State Bar Association, authoring its Bankruptcy Bulletin for three years, and he is just coming off a two-year term as the section's representative to the state bar Assembly. Moratzka is also a contributing editor for the American Bankruptcy Institute Journal and writes a bankruptcy law update for state bar's monthly publication.

Moratzka has always been passionate about economics, and wants the subject to remain a vital part of education. To that end he's involved in the Learning Center for Economics through the Rotary Club of Minneapolis. The program advocates for the continuance of economics as a subject area in high schools.

"I believe everyone can benefit from the very basic information of economics, such as how to manage a checking account or what it means when the Federal Reserve changes the interest rate," Moratzka says.

He's also an avid skier, and was a member of the St. Olaf alpine ski team throughout college. Since then, he has worked with other alumni to set up the Friends of St. Olaf Skiing, a nonprofit group devoted to keeping alumni active and interested in the college's skiing programs.

— Jane Pribek



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