

LEGAL LEADERS OF SOUTHWESTERN ILLINOIS

HeplerBroom attorney grew up as a carpenter, now builds an honored law career

For as long as he can remember, Troy Bozarth has been attracted to building and creating things.

"I've always enjoyed the prospect of growing and building something, the idea of creating something alive and organic made up of people working together," he explained.

It started on the family farm in McLean County, where he watched his grandfather, father, and uncles create things from the land. He also learned carpentry from his father, a skill he put to good use by working nearly full time as a union laborer and as a carpenter throughout his undergraduate and law school years.

When he started at Illinois Wesleyan, Bozarth was eager to learn about all things business-related, everything from the financial side to human resources to choosing the most effective tools and building a business's infrastructure.

"I just loved the concept of creating a going concern, a thing that people would benefit from, whether it was providing goods or services," he said. He did find, however, that he was particularly drawn to his business law courses, so much so that during his undergraduate years, he did three law-related internships in McLean County: one for a circuit judge (the late Charles Witte), one in the state's attorney's office, and the third with the juvenile probation department.

After earning his Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration, Bozarth wanted to continue to pursue his dual love of business and law. Drake University's joint M.B.A./law degree program fit those desires perfectly.

When he graduated with honors from Drake in 1996 (after completing the four-year program in three years), Bozarth wanted to join a law firm where he could do trial work. "I think I have a knack for being able to communicate a client's position," he said. He found his legal home at HeplerBroom.

"The firm was much smaller then, but the quality of mentoring and leadership I experienced from our senior attorneys was unparalleled," Bozarth recalled. Over the years, HeplerBroom has expanded from one office to six, and the number of attorneys and support staff have grown exponentially. But Bozarth is quick to point out that the firm's growth is client driven.

"We aren't looking to grow just to grow," he stated. "Most of our growth has come as a response to clients' needs and their requests for help, both in practice areas and geographically."

He's also proud of the fact that as the firm has grown in size, it has retained its high priority on providing both top-quality legal expertise and excellent client service.

Bozarth feels that over the years, he, too, has grown professionally. He's used his knack for effectively communicating clients' positions in hundreds of matters in a variety of practice areas, including nationwide class action suits and pharmaceutical and medical device cases. He's argued cases at the local, state, and federal levels, including U.S. Courts of Appeals, and is licensed to practice before the United States Supreme Court. His skills and hard work have earned him recognition from clients and peers



Troy Bozarth

alike, including being listed as an AV Preeminent Attorney by Martindale-Hubbell, as an Illinois *Leading Lawyer* by Law Bulletin Publishing Company, and as an Illinois *Super Lawyer* by Thomson Reuters.

He's also been active in a number of bar and professional associations, particularly the Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel (IDC). Initially he got involved with IDC because senior members of the firm wanted to expose him to the educational opportunities available through the organization. "They saw it as a way to grow a more well-rounded lawyer," he said. Eventually he took on leadership roles, ultimately serving as IDC's president from 2015 to 2016. "It was definitely a lot of work, but it's an organization that a lot of us are very proud of." (HeplerBroom has had more IDC presidents than any other firm in the state.) One of the group's core goals is to maintain a fair and equal civil

justice system. "We think the best way to help society is to have equal justice for everyone," Bozarth stated.

In addition to IDC, he is active in the Defense Research Institute (DRI), a national organization committed to enhancing the skills, effectiveness, and professionalism of defense lawyers and to improving the civil justice system. He currently serves on DRI's Center for Law and Public Policy Class Action Task Force, which, among other activities, provides extensive amicus briefs to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Bozarth has also taken on leadership roles at Hepler Broom. In 2001, he became a partner in the firm, and for the past several years he's been making equal use of his law and business management skills.

"I do a lot more mentoring now," he said, "making sure our attorneys provide the high level of service our clients expect."



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