

40 under

F O R T Y

2014



MICHAEL McGRORY

AGE

37

LAW SCHOOL

DePaul College of Law

AREA OF PRACTICE

Aviation Law,
Commercial Litigation

FIRM

Smith Amundsen
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Chicago, IL 60601

Michael McGrory is an attorney who soars above the rest. McGrory, 37, is a partner in SmithAmundsen's Aerospace & Commercial Transportation Practice Group. His practice includes commercial litigation, product liability, insurance litigation, and public entity and government liability. He has experience in all phases of federal and state court litigation.

McGrory, who began his career as a prosecutor for the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, now represents airlines, airports, aircraft owners and manufacturers in lawsuits arising out of accidents all over the world. He has litigated general aviation lawsuits and business disputes for aviation companies.

A former governor noticed McGrory's potential even before he began his legal career. Illinois Governor James R. Thompson, who served from 1977 to 1991, met McGrory when McGrory worked as his assistant at Winston & Strawn. Thompson encouraged McGrory to go to law school, and then McGrory attended DePaul University College of Law. "Here we have a young lawyer who writes for legal publications, lectures on aviation law and is a partner in his firm," Thompson said. "I had not accomplished as much at his age."

McGrory's skills as an attorney have not gone unnoticed by his peers. Suzanne Massel, general counsel for Homefinder.com, formerly worked with McGrory.

"He is an enormously talented lawyer who has handled complex aviation matters with great success," Massel said, adding McGrory is also professional and courteous. "He has contributed widely to the field of aviation with his writings in publications, blogs, and email alerts about developments in the law," Massel said. "Because of his articles he has been invited to speak at several conferences and is becoming well known in the industry."

Another fellow attorney said unlike most young attorneys, McGrory is well-versed in both plaintiff and defense tort litigation work. "He is under 40, has tried several complex jury trials, has argued appeals both before the Seventh Circuit and the Illinois Appellate Court, and has developed expertise in the areas of aviation law, commercial litigation, and regulatory matters," the attorney said. "Mike has been invited to speak at national aviation law conferences, writes frequently for well-respected aviation law publications, and holds leadership positions within various aviation law organizations."

Christopher J. Cummings, with Cummings & Duda, Ltd., serves as village attorney for Homewood. He said he has worked with McGrory closely during McGrory's service as a member of the village's Board of Fire and Police Commissioners. He also relied on McGrory's expertise on a personal business matter. "As a member of the Fire and Police Commission, Mike is always prepared and has deftly maneuvered the difficult area of public sector hiring," Cummings said. "His opinions are well thought out and respected by his fellow board members. He freely volunteers his time for this unpaid position."

McGrory also has taken the lead on the firm's developing niche practice in medical cannabis. He advises medical cannabis industry clients on Illinois regulatory compliance. In addition in growing this new area of practice McGrory has been asked to speak at the CBA on medical cannabis.

Massel said outside of work, McGrory is a committed family man who also makes time to give back to the community. She commended his work on the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners. "In doing this he gives to his community but also honors his father who has had a long career in the police force," Massel said. "He also is active in coaching youth sports and participates in other boards as well." McGrory is also on the Board of Directors for Mental Health America of Illinois. Massel said, "In sum, Mike embodies what our profession needs – smart lawyers who exhibit the utmost professionalism, stay on top of current legal developments while sharing information with peers, and give back to the community."

“ENORMOUSLY TALENTED LAWYER”