

MISSOURI LAWYERS WEEKLY

Vol. 18, No. 35

August 30, 2004

www.molawyersweekly.com

\$7.00 per copy

Missouri's Up And Coming Lawyers Are Cream Of Crop *10 Young Attorneys Highlighted In Annual Feature*

In this seventh-annual issue, we highlight five "rising stars" — Missouri lawyers under the age of 40 who have already distinguished themselves in some manner and appear poised for even greater things.

Lawyers Weekly received an unprecedented number of nominations for Up and Coming Lawyers this year, many of them truly impressive. While that made our selections very difficult, it also means that the state has a terrific young crop of lawyers for us to salute this year and in the years to come.

They come from all parts of the state and from all types of legal practices — plaintiffs' work, insurance defense, criminal, corporate and in-house.

Teresa BARTOSIAK

At 35, St. Louis lawyer Teresa Bartosiak is already the national counsel for Thermadyne Industries, a St. Louis-based company that makes welding and cutting products. A partner at Sandberg, Phoenix and von Gontard, Bartosiak's administrative skills have also landed her at the helm of the firm's health group practice.

"I'm in charge of setting up staffing for every new matter," Bartosiak said. And as the firm's marketing committee co-chair, she's also heavily involved in public relations, marketing and client relations.

Marketing is a natural fit for the speech communications major at the University of Illinois in Champaign. But the law has always been her calling.

"I always knew I wanted to be a lawyer," Bartosiak said.

While she was an undergraduate, Bartosiak penned a bill for the Illinois Legislature that allowed the University of Illinois' moniker to appear on license plates. The fee levied for the plates would go to scholarships for low income students. In addition to writing the bill, which passed, she also testified in support of the measure.

After college, Bartosiak attended Washington University School of Law and graduated in 1993. After law school, she spent one year clerking for Judge William Crandall on the Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, and then jumped straight to the



St. Louis-based firm of Sandberg, Phoenix, and von Gontard. She's been there ever since and was named partner in 2000.

Her role as national counsel for Thermadyne consumes a great deal of Bartosiak's time, requiring her to travel around the country supervising cases.

"We hire local counsel, we'll take depositions, and we take an active role," Bartosiak said of her duties. It isn't unusual for her to be traveling four out of every five days each week.

So far in her career, Bartosiak selects two cases as her most memorable.

The first is *Klugesherz v. American*

Name: Teresa Bartosiak

Age: 35

Education: University of Illinois, B.A. Speech Communication, 1990; Washington University School of Law, J.D., 1993

Experience: Partner, Sandberg, Phoenix & von Gontard, P.C.

Honda Motor Company, which she worked on as an associate. In that case, a young boy was seriously injured while he was operating an all-terrain vehicle. He filed suit against the manufacturer, American Honda Company, for failure to warn of the danger of operating an ATV by a young person.

The case was tried in the City of St. Louis by Keith Phoenix, a partner at the firm. A jury returned a verdict for the plaintiff, but the trial judge granted the motion for a judgment notwithstanding the verdict.

"This was my first big case I worked on here at the firm," Bartosiak said. "I was the main person on the appeal."

It was an appeal that Bartosiak's client won. The court noted that the boy had been warned by his parent and the parents of an older friend that he shouldn't drive the ATV. Therefore, any additional warnings from the manufacturer wouldn't have changed his behavior.

Another important case Bartosiak singled out was *Thornton v. Gray Automotive Parts Company*. She served as co-counsel for the defense. In that case, a mechanic was severely injured when a truck jack slipped out from under a six-ton truck and hit him in the face. He needed seven surgeries to repair the extensive damage.

The mechanic sued the jack manufacturer for product liability alleging a design defect. Although a Jackson County jury returned a \$450,000 verdict for the mechanic, it also found him 95 percent at fault for the accident.

In addition to her duties as the health group practice leader and national counsel, Bartosiak was also a founding member of the firm's Charitable Efforts Committee.

"During the holidays, we adopt families," Bartosiak said. "We bought everything for a family one year," including furniture and beds.

And the Bethalto, Ill., resident is also active with her husband in the Alton Boys & Girls Club. They help organize an annual golf tournament in which the proceeds go to the club.

When asked what she hopes for in her practice five years from now, Bartosiak said, "I'd like to be providing excellent client service, trying cases and managing a happy family life."

— BY ANN CORRIGAN