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2007 Distinguished Achievement Award - Business

Michael Kolloway '82

So many college students often ask why they have to take certain required courses: “What good are they? What have they to do with my future career?” Michael Kolloway’s career path and life since graduation Magna Cum Laude from St. Norbert College in 1982, with majors in English and Political Science, is an example of the benefits of a liberal arts education.

A long-time aspiration to become a trial lawyer led to earning his law degree (JD) from the University of Illinois in 1985. For a number of years thereafter, his practice included transactional work and trying cases in both state and federal courts. He was a member of the Federal Trial Bar and presented oral argument before the Illinois Court of Appeals. In 1994, he became a partner in the Chicago law firm of Rock, Fusco & Garvey, Ltd. His responsibilities at Rock, Fusco increasingly involved him in complex financial and banking documentation, as well as agreements pertaining to mergers and acquisitions and the conversion of mutual savings associations to stock ownership. Along the way, he mentored and managed associate attorneys in civil litigation matters. His experience with significant commercial business transactions led, in 2001, to his appointment as Senior Vice President and General Counsel for three engineering companies owned by AECOM Technology Corporation, a global engineering company with over 33,000 employees. In 2005, he was promoted to AECOM’s Vice President and Assistant General Counsel for AECOM’s Operations and Risk Management. As such, he manages legal operations and General Counsels for AECOM’s operating companies in the U.S., the United Kingdom, Hong Kong/China, Australia, New Zealand and the Middle East.

Michael is the co-chair of the In-House Subcommittee of the Construction Litigation Committee of the American Bar Association and the author of a chapter on contractual considerations and risks in the book entitled Design Build Subsurface Conditions. He is also asked to speak at professional conferences. This fall, he will make presentations at the Associated Owners and Developers conference in Washington D.C., the 2nd Annual Corporate Counsels Conference and the San Francisco Super-Conference for engineering professionals.

There are so many factors to which one can attribute Michael’s remarkable career success. The best advice the he was given as he started practicing law was to “focus upon the little things, and the big things will fall into place.” This advice, coupled with this is his firm belief that there is no substitute for dedication and hard work, is the key to Mike’s success.

As committed as he is to his professional life, Michael would like to focus more of his time upon his wife, Rita (Reilly) '83, and upon providing guidance for his daughters, Elizabeth and Laura, as they enter college and the job market, and begin their own families.

So, of what value was his major in English? An immeasurably lifelong passion for reading and the theatre have enriched his life since college. In particular, he enjoys seeing Shakespeare's plays and fulfilling his goal of seeing all of the Bard's plays; so far, he has seen all but one. And this love of reading and Shakespeare was engendered by his counselor and teacher at SNC, Dr. Ken Zahorski. Mike attributes a great deal of his success to the mentoring of Dr. Zahorski, who "brought passion to the subjects that he taught, and ... made me realize that, in order to be truly successful, I would have to choose a career that I was passionate about. Dr. Zahorski also conveyed a love of learning and the need to grow and continue with my education after college and law school."

English and Political Science courses? They certainly worked for Michael Kolloway!

St. Norbert College

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