

Legal Elite

Readers' Choice

Compiled by Will Beaudouin

Some of the most trying and hazardous times for any business can be when a legal issue arises. Be it a merger, an acquisition or unwanted litigation, the difference between coming out ahead and being set back by years can come down to the smallest of details. So if your company's future were hanging in balance, who would you want in your corner?

When it comes to legal advice, you can't put a price on honesty and competence. With 15 years practicing law on average, these attorneys bring seasoned knowledge and sharp minds to the table. A quick-witted attorney watching your back can turn an underdog into the favorite – and then some.

In the pages that follow, attorneys from the Greater Baltimore region are listed alphabetically by last name with their firm name and area of expertise. In our readers weighed in on why they feel their attorney is top-notch.

Editor's note: This list is based on readers' responses and does not reflect the opinions of SmartCEO magazine.

ATTORNEYS

JEFFREY T. AGNOR, member

Davis, Agnor, Rapaport & Skalny, LLC

Entrepreneurs, businesses, investors and non-profit organizations

"Jeff is a superb business lawyer. He understands what makes businesses successful, and he focuses on getting contracts done, rather than looking for ways to put up blockades. He not only understands and protects his clients, but he helps them negotiate successful, fair and uncomplicated terms that help business partners get to a win-win agreement." – VINCENT MARUCCI, principal and co-owner, Trusant Technologies LLC

SHAUN CARRICK, principal

Miles and Stockbridge P.C.

Housing and community development

"Shaun leverages his knowledge as an attorney to support causes that benefit the community in which he does business." – TERRI HARRINGTON, vice president, MacKenzie Commercial Real Estate Services

ANTHONY DIPAULA, attorney

Law Offices of Anthony J. DiPaula, P.A.

Personal, family and small business

"We have used Tony DiPaula as our attorney for the full 27 years that he has been practicing. He is effective and fair." – THOMAS IACOBONI, president, Iacoboni Site Specialists, Inc.

DAVID ELLIN, attorney

Law Office of David Ellin, P.C.

Medical malpractice and wrongful death

JOHN A. HAYDEN, partner

Whiteford Taylor Preston LLP

Mergers and acquisitions, trusts, wills and estate planning

"In addition to being an excellent attorney, he gives back to the community by on the Baltimore County School Board, the Towson University Foundation Board, Baltimore County Foundation and many more non-profits." – ELAYNE HETTL executive director, Leadership Baltimore County

JAMES A. LIST, founding partner

The Law Offices of James A. List, LLC

Business, real estate, estate planning, asset protection, trust needs

"As the president of The Arc Baltimore Board of Directors, Jim List provides leadership and vision that is always mission-focused. In addition, as a presenter on special trusts and other legal matters that can affect families of children with developmental disabilities, Jim conveys clear counsel on matters that can be complex and emotional." – STEPHEN H. MORGAN, executive director, The Arc Baltimore

LOUISE PHIPPS SENFT, founder

Baltimore Mediation

Mediation

"Louise is an exceptional attorney who exhibits keen fairness through her mediation conflict resolution process for individuals and organizations."

– KATHERINE ARMSTRONG, certified financial planner, Heritage Financial Consultants

L. CONTENT MCLAUGHLIN, founder

McLaughlin Law Group

Personal, family and business

"Content McLaughlin treats me with respect, makes me feel comfortable – even in the situation may not be so – and speaks on my level so that I can understand

BRIAN M. SHEAHAN, partner

Gebhardt & Smith

Mergers and acquisitions, real estate, corporate law

"Brian has been my attorney since I started my first business in 2001 and just recently was an integral component to a successful merger with our company in the last year. He is a deal-maker." — **SCOTT HARGEST**, president, CPS Gumpert, Inc.

DAVID L. SNYDER, of counsel

Neuberger, Quinn, Gielen, Rubin & Gibber P.A.

Business planning, tax planning

"David is an extremely skilled and very fair negotiator, making all parties feel good in a difficult situation." — **MICHAEL CONSTANTINE**, president, Constantine Commercial Construction

IRVING E. WALKER, member

Cole Schotz

Bankruptcy

"Irv wields great knowledge like a craftsman in the courtroom. His ability, substance and style leave other litigation attorneys in his wake." — **LEONARD RASKIN**, owner, Raskin Global

RIISING TO THE TOP

As if one nomination wasn't enough to highlight the expertise of this year's Legal Elite, SmartCEO received multiple nominations for these stand-out attorneys.

L. CONTENT MCLAUGHLIN, founder

McLaughlin Law Group

"Content possesses confidence, focus and an unmatched elegance in executing proactive expert legal representation in the entrepreneurial arena. All legal matters are handled with passion, knowledge and a razor-sharp focus."

— **SHERREE ROGERS**, founder, editor, *iSingleParent Magazine*

"Content has built a successful practice around being a tremendous legal and practical resource for small and mid-sized companies. She had been an advocate for women- and minority-owned companies, working with the state of Maryland to increase opportunities." — **KARIN SCHWARTZ**, CEO, *Springboard, LLC*

MICHAEL N. MERCURIO, principal

Business and real estate

"Mike takes a very practical approach in applying the law to each engagement and works effectively with a team of advisers to achieve the best results for clients. I have worked with Mike for over 10 years and have been impressed with the way he handles every client with great care and makes even the most complex business transactions understandable for everyone." — **MARK CISELL**,

managing partner, *Katz Abosch*

LAURA L. RUBENSTEIN, principal

Offit Kurman

Employment and general civil litigation

"Laura is an extremely knowledgeable attorney, and over the past seven years, she has become one of my most trusted 'go to' advisors." — **KELLY MITCHELL**, principal, *impactHR, LLC*

ADAM ZARREN, partner

Saul Ewing LLP

Mergers and acquisitions

"Adam is an intelligent, motivated attorney who thinks outside the box."

— **ADAM SMOLEN**, president and CEO, *The Quantum Group*



**Council, Baradel,
Kosmerl & Nolan, P.A.**

Susan Stobbart Shapiro, Partner

(410) 268-6600 | www.CBKNLaw.com

It is no surprise that Susan Stobbart Shapiro was drawing attention in employment law matters—she watched her business get sued for age discrimination in the 1970's claim was defeated at trial because of solid employment protection. The lesson stuck. Businesses are best protected by a strong foundation of employment policies and procedures vigorously defended against claims.

In the eighteen years that she has been practicing at Council, Baradel, Kosmerl & Nolan, P.A., Susan has represented companies from a national airline, to "Mom and Pop shops" and everything in between. Shapiro explained, "It is fascinating to learn about a business and satisfying to create a solid foundation of employment policies and documents that bring organization and protection to the business. In addition to my parents owning several businesses, my husband started an IT company that he started fourteen years ago. I see the work to make a company succeed and how important it is for the owner to be free to run the business without having to become entangled in byzantine employment law matters."

To assist busy business owners and managers, Susan provides articles (www.stobbartshapiro.com) and Twitter feed (@StobbartShapiro) provide quick snippets of helpful employment law tips.

Susan noted that the practice of employment law has changed a great deal over the last decade.

"The intersection of social media and employment law has created a ton of new issues for businesses to deal with: Who owns the Twitter feed? Can your company fire an employee for badmouthing Facebook? Can the business remotely "wipe" an employee's personal iPhone if it contains company data? Most of these issues are easily addressed if they are thought through and properly planned in advance. So much of employment law is in the planning and execution. It is important for an employment lawyer today to be knowledgeable about tech and social media."

Susan is honored to be part of the 2012 SmartCEO Legal Elite.

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