

Points of Interest is published regularly for clients and friends.



Points of

INTEREST

Good Work and Good People Keep McCurdy & Candler Strong

When you treat people well, they tend to stick around.

Tony DeMarlo, managing partner at McCurdy & Candler LLC in Decatur, Ga., has been with the firm 33 years; several of his most experienced colleagues have never worked anywhere else. In addition, some clients have been with the firm for nearly two decades. Clients and employees alike appreciate the firm's relaxed and friendly work environment, where people at all levels are readily accessible to clients and to each other.

"That's one of the things that makes us different, especially considering our size," says Deborah Chandler, director of operations and client relations for the firm which has more than 200 employees. "We have the technology and systems of a large firm, but we have a small firm feel."

"Our attorneys are hands-on at every level, with everyone working together as a team to exceed client expectations," adds DeMarlo.

Founded in 1951, the firm was sole general counsel for Decatur Federal Savings and Loan Association, the largest mortgage lender in the state, until the bank was acquired in the early 1990s. The firm's business model expanded then, with McCurdy & Candler focusing more on providing "cradle-to-grave" default services for a wider range of national lenders and servicers. Since then, while



the organization continues to maintain strong general practice and traditional residential real estate practice groups, the default service practice has grown to include the state of Tennessee in addition to Georgia. The default practice joined The National Firm, LLC in 2007.

During McCurdy & Candler's nearly 60 years in business, its name has become synonymous with ethical excellence. "Ethics is more than just a word to us," says DeMarlo. "We teach our employees that there's a higher ethical standard in the legal field than there might be elsewhere and that we have to abide by that standard."

The company's philosophy reminds employees that, "Mediocrity is not acceptable." As evidence of this, Lender Processing Services, Inc. (LPS) has recognized the firm's work with its Summit Award for excellence in foreclosure and bankruptcy for every quarter in both 2007 and 2008, the only firm in the LPS network of more than 100 organizations to achieve this level of consistent excellence.

McCurdy & Candler is also in the Fannie Mae Retained Attorney Network and was selected as a Freddie Mac Designated Counsel firm for Georgia. Both honors underscore the quality of the firm's work and the trust enjoyed by clients.

But what makes DeMarlo and Chandler most proud is the company's ability to maintain its work quality and client service levels while nearly quadrupling in size during the past five years. "A lot of that has to do with the solid foundation we have with our experienced managers," says Chandler. "They have done an amazing job of training others while maintaining our quality. We're very proud of that."

If those newer employees follow the lead of others at the Georgia firm, they will enjoy the benefits of the firm's family atmosphere for years to come.

Industry Profile: Deborah Chandler

Deborah Chandler, the newest partner at McCurdy & Candler LLC, loves working in the business side of the law practice, so her position as director of client relations and operations for the Decatur, Ga., firm suits her well.

“I really like having the flexibility to manage the big picture while still working as an attorney and rendering legal advice,” Chandler says.

Her job is far-reaching – operations at the firm encompasses everything from case management workflows to client relations to IT – and intense. But Chandler enjoys all of it.

“I’m a big picture person. I like taking a step back and seeing how all of the pieces fit together, then working with people, whether within the firm or with our clients, to help them fit even better,” Chandler says. “It is also a tremendous honor to have become a partner of a long-established firm with an outstanding reputation for both client service and ethical standards. I feel very fortunate to have such incredible support and friendship with the other default partners, Tony DeMarlo, Sid Gelernter, and Michael Dugan. I look forward to working with them in this new role.”

Chandler’s IT responsibilities include making sure client data is protected, so she has assumed the additional responsibility of becoming a certified information privacy professional. “It’s important that clients know we are committed to security and privacy. This certification process is one more way to assure them that we are state-of-the-art in this area,” she says.

Chandler joined the firm in 2004 after an impressive real estate law career with government organizations that included the Federal Asset Disposition Association and the Resolution Trust Corporation, where she served as an ad-hoc general counsel for individual savings and loan operations as their assets were liquidated. She shifted to the business side when she joined a law firm that created an industry software product, NewInvoice, which is now known as Invoice Management. Chandler’s responsibilities included product management; after it was purchased by Fidelity, she accepted an offer there to continue working with the product business.

Although she thoroughly enjoyed what she was doing for NewInvoice, Chandler was presented with a unique opportunity by McCurdy & Candler. She accepted a position at the firm which had once employed her to do title searches after she graduated from law school. “It has turned out to be a wonderful situation for me this time, too,” she says.



A member of REOMAC and the International Association of Privacy Professionals, Chandler travels extensively, meeting with clients and representing the firm at industry conferences and events. Her job and responsibilities as the mother of a daughter about to graduate from college leave little time for hobbies or community service work, but she and her fiancée try to find time to play golf or take short trips to the beach or mountains.

“I’m not someone who enjoys being in maintenance mode, so all of this is a good fit for me, keeping me challenged on a daily basis,” she says.

Freddie Mac Taps McCarthy & Holthus in Arizona

Member firm McCarthy & Holthus, LLP has been appointed a Freddie Mac Designated Counsel firm for Arizona. One of only three practices in the state with the prestigious designation, McCarthy & Holthus is also Freddie Mac Designated Counsel in California.

“We are honored to be selected by Freddie Mac to participate in this program,” says Kevin McCarthy, firm partner. “This is a reflection of our staff’s commitment to excellence and ethics in Arizona. We’re looking forward to expanding our relationship with Freddie Mac and the servicers in Arizona.”

McCarthy & Holthus, LLP is now accepting Arizona default referrals under the Freddie Mac Designated Program. For more information, contact Kevin McCarthy at kmccarthy@McCarthyHolthus.com.

Novel REO Concept Garner National Media Attention

We introduced you to QualityFirst Home Marketing, a division of McCarthy Holthus Real Estate Corporation, in the winter issue of this newsletter. QualityFirst offers a clever program that uses temporary resident managers to create a “market to sell” look for REO homes so they sell quicker and for more money.

This novel concept has caught the attention of the national media in recent weeks, generating exciting buzz about how the QualityFirst approach is effectively showcasing REO properties. QualityFirst has been featured on the front page of *The Wall Street Journal* and on ABC-TV’s “Nightline;” we’ve got links to the coverage on The National Firm Web site at www.thenationalfirm.com. Check it out!

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.



MDK Hires from Deaf Community

Sometimes, the smallest things can make the biggest difference.

Before Nick Bullett joined the document control department at Manley Deas Kochalski LLC, he learned basic sign language at his previous employer. It wasn't hard – he has a natural aptitude for it. A few months after he started with MDK, the company hired a deaf employee to work in Bullett's department. Because he could sign, Bullett offered to partner with the new employee, and learned more sign language as a result.

When Bullett was named department head shortly after that and had an opportunity to hire another qualified deaf employee, he did so. Today, MDK employs four deaf people in Columbus and two in Cincinnati for computer-based work that involves print production, data entry, and electronic filing. Bullett says he hires individuals not because they are deaf, but because they are the right people for the job.

"I'm just doing what's best for the firm," says Bullett, who contacts the Columbus Speech and Hearing Center when he has an opening. "The center introduces me to great candidates. The people I've hired through them are all smart, capable, and very dependable."

MDK supports its deaf employees by providing video phone-equipped work stations that aid communication with hearing people. It has also hired interpreters to attend the company Christmas party and offered eight-week lunchtime American sign language classes

"We now have several employees here who can use the basic signs and some who have a serviceable vocabulary," Bullett notes.

Jennifer Smith Dudash, assistant program director at the Columbus Speech and Hearing Center, would like to work with more companies like MDK. "The unemployment rate for Americans with disabilities was 65 percent before the recession and is probably worse now, so we are always pleased when we have somebody who is a good fit for MDK," she says. "That company is an example of what we'd like to see in every employer in the area."

Learn more about the benefits of hiring deaf people at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, <http://tinyurl.com/caq6hw>.



Manley Deas Kochalski deaf employees George Franklin, left, and Mark Devere, use sign language to communicate in the office.

Linda Orlans Receives Distinguished Alumni Award

The Michigan State University College of Law Alumni Association has selected Linda Orlans, founder and managing partner of Orlans Associates, for the prestigious 2009 George N. Bashara, Jr. Distinguished Alumni Award.

The award recognizes and honors graduates for distinguished service or accomplishments in their community, business, or profession; for participation and contributions to the goals of the law college; and for personal accomplishments.



Orlans has received numerous honors and awards on behalf of her organization and is a frequent speaker and trainer on a broad spectrum of industry issues.

A member of several industry organizations, she is a founding member of Women Executives in Banking (WEB).

Orlans' dedication to philanthropy is impressive. She helped create and actively participates on the boards of the Beaumont Hospital Foundation's First Words Society and Beyond Basics, a community support group for underserved school children and their families. In addition to serving on the board of directors for Junior Achievement and its fundraising and executive committees, Orlans supports and initiated the HOPE (Home Ownership Preservation Enterprise) Project in Detroit. She also serves on the Michigan State University College of Law board of trustees and the Inforum Center for Leadership board of directors.

Orlans will be honored at the MSU College of Law commencement exercises on May 15, 2009.



Fortune magazine honors Manley Deas Kochalski

Manley Deas Kochalski LLC has been named by several of its clients as a “Go-To Law Firm” for 2009. The firm is featured in the May 4, 2009, annual Fortune 500 edition of *Fortune Magazine*.

The Columbus firm is one of several selected by the publishers of *Corporate Counsel* magazine, who surveyed the general counsel of corporations nationwide to identify top firms in nine practice areas. Manley Deas Kochalski was selected as a prestigious Go-To Law Firm in two categories: Litigation and Banking & Finance.

“We are thrilled that our colleagues at MDK have received this national recognition,” says Kathleen Feeney, senior vice president of The National Firm.



“This is an impressive honor and one that is well-deserved.”

Manley Deas Kochalski, a Fannie Mae Retained Attorney Network firm, was founded in 2002. The firm’s more than 240 employees in Columbus, Cleveland, and Cincinnati serve clients in Ohio and Kentucky. Its Columbus headquarters is known for its progressive work environment – a renovated light industrial building – and employee benefits that feature in-house wellness initiatives; Eco-Bucks, a program that pays employees to ride their bikes to work; support of the local arts community; and a commitment to hiring from the deaf community. For more information, visit www.mdk-llc.com.

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