

ICON AWARDS

CELEBRATING DISTINGUISHED LEADERS IN LAW
2019

Jean Paul Bradshaw II



Lathrop Gage

During the past three decades, Kansas City attorney Jean Paul Bradshaw II has forged a career that blends an interest in politics and family legacies in the legal profession and public service.

Bradshaw is partner-in-charge of Lathrop Gage's Kansas City office, as well as founder and chairman of Lathrop Gage Consulting, a subsidiary founded in 2017 focusing on government affairs, lobbying, procurement and crisis management.

His practice includes toxic and mass tort cases, class actions, white-collar criminal defense and government relations.

The Springfield native initially pursued a journalism career, graduating from the University of Missouri and working as a journalist for a local radio station. He said he always believed that he'd become a lawyer, however, and that he'd follow in the footsteps of his father and grandfather.

In 1981, he graduated from the University of Missouri School of Law, then worked alongside his father for eight years. During that time, he also was a special assistant attorney general for the Missouri Attorney General's Office.

President George H.W. Bush appointed him in 1989 as U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, where he served until 1993.

Bradshaw said he enjoyed the independence the role offered.

"You get to make decisions based upon what you think is the right thing. You work with some really talented and dedicated people who are trying to do the right thing," he said. "Whereas in private practice, as long as it's not illegal or unethical, you're bound to do what your client wants to do — that's your ethical obligation."

After his stint at the U.S. Attorney's Office ended, he joined Gage & Tucker, which later became Lathrop Gage.

His practice today is an extension of his interest in

politics, shaped by his family history. His grandfather, Jean Paul Bradshaw, was a candidate for governor and the U.S. Senate. His father, Paul Bradshaw, served in the Missouri Senate and practiced law in Springfield.

Bradshaw said his newest venture, Lathrop's consulting effort, has taken off faster than expected. The consulting arm acquired a two-person Jefferson City lobbying firm and more than doubled its existing business.

The idea behind it was to better serve existing clients, as well as to gain law firm clients from the consulting side, he said.

"That was part of the idea from a business development standpoint, being able to serve the clients better because we provide more services," he said. "I think it's gone very well."

In general, Bradshaw said he's most proud of his work defending concentrated animal-feeding operations against odor-nuisance lawsuits.

"I came into that with very little knowledge about agriculture, and I enjoyed it," he said, noting that he found it fascinating how many people in cities are not aware of how food production works. "The disconnect between rural and urban areas on how we produce food is an interesting topic that goes beyond law."

He said his goal as an attorney has been to treat others, including opposing parties and counsel, with respect.

"There's too many times we think that, as lawyers, we are the party," he said. "We're not. We're representing the party, and we can make things too personal."

"It'll make your practice more enjoyable, and it helps the public's perception of us as lawyers if we are decent people and treat other people properly," he said.

Outside of his practice, Bradshaw is a Mizzou sports fan and also serves on The Missouri 100, an advisory board to the UM System.

— Jessica Shumaker