



Thomas J. Bonasera

Partner

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Columbus, OH

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Tom, a former member of the firm's Board of Directors and Executive Committee, focuses his practice on estate planning, trust and probate estate administration and litigation. He advises professional and individual trustees on administration and fiduciary litigation matters, and his clients include executors, administrators and heirs in probate estates, trusts and guardianships. He counsels clients on a broad range of trust and estate planning, fiduciary litigation matters, obligations and liabilities of trustees and other fiduciaries and trust and estate beneficiary rights. Tom's practice also includes representing closely held businesses in disputes and serving as a frequent arbitrator in American Arbitration Association cases.

Organizers are eager to leverage Tom's extensive legal and business knowledge, making him a frequent writer and speaker on trusts/estates, fiduciary litigation, probate administration and probate/fiduciary administration/litigation case law updates. He also advises on special needs trusts and planning, wrongful death settlements and notice, Ohio Trust Code and provides counsel on closely held business matters and disputes and the selling and buying of law practices. He also guides attorneys on how to make the most of their practices and on successions planning for lawyers and law firms.

Tom is also a trained and experienced arbitrator and mediator who has regularly overseen numerous arbitrations since the late 1970s. He has regularly served and continues to serve as the chair of three-judge panels and as a sole arbiter. He was a member of the NASD, Panel of Arbitrators, and continues to be a member of the AAA, Panel of Arbitrators.

Services

- Private Client & Family Wealth Planning
- Corporate & Transactional
- ADR Center

Education

- Capital University School of Law (J.D., 1975)
 - Order of the Curia

- The Ohio State University (B.S., 1970)

Bar Admissions

- Ohio

Court Admissions

- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio

Affiliations/Memberships

- The American College of Trust and Estate Counsel
 - Fellow
 - Fiduciary Litigation Committee, past member
- Ohio State Bar Association,
 - Past president (1999 - 2000)
 - Past Board of Governors (1996 - 1998)
 - District 7 delegate (1988 - present)
 - Estate Planning, Trust and Probate Law, Section and Elder Law Committee
- Ohio State Bar Foundation
 - Fellow
 - Board member
 - Development Committee, chair
- Columbus Bar Association
 - Past president (1993 - 1994)
 - Past Board of Governors (1986 - 1995)
 - Professionalism Committee
 - Probate Court Committee, past chair
- Columbus Bar Foundation, fellow
- The Columbus Foundation, Professional Advisory Council
- Franklin County Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board
 - Past board member
 - Past chair

- Ohio Commission on Racial Fairness
 - Task Force
 - Implementing Task Force Committee
- National Association of Securities, Panel of Arbitrators
- American Arbitration Association
 - Commercial Rules, panel member, arbitrator
- Central Ohio Association for Justice, fka Franklin County Trial Lawyers Association, Probate Court Committee, past chair
- The American Red Cross of Greater Columbus
 - Past board member
 - Emeritus board member
- Ronald McDonald House Charities of Columbus
 - Past president
 - Past board member
- Legal Aid Society of Columbus (LASC)
 - Board member
 - Past president
- Alzheimer's Association of Columbus, past board member
- Columbus Medical Research Foundation, board member
- Ohio Supreme Court, Lawyer to Lawyer Mentoring Program, participant
- Ohio State Legal Services Association, including Southeastern Ohio Legal Services (SOELS) and the Ohio Poverty Law Center
 - President
 - Chair
- The Ohio State University Brain And Spine Neuroscience Campaign Committee
- Central Ohio Lawyers for Justice (f/k/a Franklin County Trial Lawyers), Probate Court, past chair
- Columbus Metropolitan Club
- Heartland Hospice, volunteer
- Community Mediation Services of Central Ohio, trained mediator

- American Arbitration Association training, Effective Mediation
- Capital University Law School Board of Counselors, member

Distinctions

- Josiah H. Blackmore, II Award
- Peer Review Rated AV in *Martindale-Hubbell*
- *Best Lawyers*®
 - "Lawyer of the Year" in Columbus for Litigation - Trusts and Estates (2019)
 - Litigation - Trusts and Estates, Trusts and Estates (2022,2024)
- Top Attorney in Ohio, *Cleveland Magazine*
- Top Lawyers by *Columbus CEO Magazine*
- *Ohio Super Lawyers*®
 - For Estate & Probate (2021)
 - Top 100 Attorneys in Ohio
 - Top 50 Attorneys in Ohio
- *Columbus Business First* as one of Central Ohio's best lawyers, as voted by his peers in the areas of trust and estate planning and administration, fiduciary litigation, closely held business succession and disputes
- Top 50 Lawyers Recognition, *Columbus Monthly*
- Ohio State Bar Association Bar Medal Award
- Columbus Bar Association's Bar Service Medal Award
- Ohio Recognition Award from St. Thomas More Society of Columbus
- Hall of Fame Inductee for Warren G. Harding High School