

Merideth V. Hammer, Esq.

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PROFILE

Dynamic, decisive, and dedicated attorney with *twenty-five* years of experience supported by an extensive management and IT background. Considered a decisive leader, mentor, and motivator; recognized for proactively and efficiently directing a team to deliver results when faced with significant business deadlines. Strategic, and conceptual thinker; able to proactively troubleshoot business issues, generate new ideas and initiate change. Results driven; works judiciously and methodically to achieve and exceed company-mandated goals. Skilled in compliance management and program monitoring. Skilled in legal case management and research. Successful negotiator of complex transactions and contracts. Effective communicator and clear, concise writer with notable presentation and interpersonal skills.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County

December 2024 – August 2025

Official keeper of the record for all judicial matters brought into one of the largest unified court systems in the United States

Responsibilities

First Deputy General Counsel assists the General Counsel with overseeing the General Counsel's Office and monitoring legislation; ensuring the Office's compliance with the applicable state, federal, and local laws, rules and policies; conducting quality assurance checks throughout the Office; and implementing the Office's compliance with new laws, rules and policies; accountable for the work product of all teams/projects assigned.

Key accomplishments include:

Led the development and implementation of processes and procedures for incoming administration, ensuring compliance of the Clerk's Office with applicable State, Federal, and local laws, rules and polices. Lead incoming administration's labor and employment team on litigation matters with successful and favorable outcomes.

Illinois Department of Employment Security

2023 – 2024

Responsibilities

Supervising Administrative Law Judge responsible for organizing, planning, executing and providing technical assistance to the Appeals Manager on policies and procedures for appeals cases for the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES). Interprets complex rules, regulations, policies and procedures for conducting hearings and preparing decisions on appeal from local office or other agency determinations. Recommends relevant further actions for cases that fail to meet federal, state and/or agency standards. Plans, assigns, reviews and evaluates the work of subordinate staff. Counsels staff regarding work performance. Reassigns staff to meet day-to-day operating needs. Establishes annual goals and objectives. Determines and recommends staffing needs. Conducts meetings to keep staff abreast of changes in policy, procedures and program operations. Discusses problem areas. Coordinates the implementation of corrective action. Adjudicates first level grievances. Effectively implements disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Determines and recommends staffing needs. Prepares and Evaluates case files for review by external agencies and/or organizations including by not limited to the U.S. Department of Labor. Serves as liaison to internal and

external groups in matters related to appeals cases. Keeps abreast of new developments in applicable laws, rules, regulations and guidelines as they apply to appeals, including but not limited to timeliness and quality standards.

Key accomplishments include:

Served on MCLE Committee coordinating and teaching four-day educational seminar for approximately 100 IDES attorneys within 6-months of start date with the agency. Currently managing eleven (11) administrative law judges.

Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County

2018 – 2021

Official keeper of the record for all judicial matters brought into one of the largest unified court systems in the United States

Responsibilities

Deputy General Counsel responsible for providing legal advice to the General Counsel, Clerk of Circuit Court, Chief Financial Officer, and Chief Human Resources Officer, Operational Chief Deputy Clerks and Assistant Chief Deputy Clerks on a variety of complex legal transactions and investigatory matters, including review and negotiation of complex procurement contracts; managing outside counsel on litigation against the Clerk's Office, especially matters related to Employment and Labor Law, and managing and training professional and support staff on systems and standard operating procedures in applying office policies; setting policy centered around the *Clerk of the Courts Act and Illinois General Assembly Public Acts* and the *Teamsters Local 700 Collective Bargaining Agreement (2017-2020)* and their implication on Clerk's Office employees; leading and managing all policy and activities related to employee benefits and defense against claims of discrimination under the *American Disabilities Act, Family and Medical Leave Act, Fair Labor Standards Act* and most recently the *Family First Coronavirus Act*.

Key accomplishments include:

Provided consistent oversight, management and legal counsel to the Clerk of Circuit Court and Chief Human Resources Officer in all matters related to employee benefits in compliance with existing and new federal, state, and local legislation during the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic; Developed and Implemented new processes and procedures, particularly technological, for the continuity of services of the General Counsel's Office and Human Resources in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic; Served as designee on behalf of the Clerk of the Circuit Court to the *Cook County Electoral Board (2019) – 2020*; Served as Clerk's Office representative on *ProSe Advisory Committee (2019- 2020)*. Served as point of contact for implementation of County wide case management system, *Odyssey CMS*.

The Hammer Legal Group

2009 - Present

Offering Probate, Real Estate, Estate Planning, Commercial Dispute Resolution, Labor & Employment Legal Services

Responsibilities

Chief Executive Officer and Lead Counsel handling legal matters centered around and related to business matters, primarily real estate litigation including Property Disputes, Title Clearance, Trusts & Estate Planning, Zoning & Planning and Real Estate Development.

Key accomplishments include:

- Beginning in 2023, Meridith Hammer and the Hammer Legal Group assisted one of their premier clients, Bourdeau Griffin Interiors & Architectural Supplies Inc. secure a \$1.9M Grant from the State of Illinois Department of Economic Development to purchase a 40,000 square foot warehouse on Chicago's Southside. HLG and BGIAS are currently working with the City of Chicago to secure a \$3.4M Redevelopment Grant to completely rehab that same building.
- From 2013-2015, Meridith Hammer was appointed *Administrative Law Judge* for the City of Indianapolis' Department of Code Enforcement. Ms. Hammer served in a supervisory role managing a team that administered a hearing case load for the department. Her most recent publicized decision was *City of Indianapolis v. Broad Ripple Village Taxi* (2013) (Upheld City of Indianapolis Licensing Administrator's decision to deny the Application for Public Vehicle for Hire License for Broad Ripple Village Taxi LPV-000013 000013 preventing the cab company from removing the safety tab locks from the vehicles and ensuring the safety of cab riders)
- In 2011, The Hammer Legal Group (HLG) was appointed via competitive bid solicitation *Legal Counsel* for Family & Social Services Administration, Office of Medicaid Policy & Planning. Ms. Hammer served as *Lead Counsel*, leading and managing a team that effectively collected over \$500,000 to date on behalf of OMPP.
- In 2011, HLG was appointed via competitive bid solicitation *Escrow Agent* for Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA). For this engagement, Ms. Hammer served as *Lead Escrow Agent*, leading and managing a team that performed cost accounting, accounts payable and cash management functions.
- In 2009, HLG was awarded via a competitive bid solicitation the *Indiana Home Energy Conservation Program Compliance Monitoring* services engagement by IHCDA. As *Senior Compliance Officer* for this project, Ms. Hammer led the team at HLG from 2009 through 2011 performing compliance monitoring for over thirty (30) statewide American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funded community housing and development organizations.

Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis

2013 - 2016

A Post-Secondary Education College

Adjunct Professor, Indianapolis, IN

Responsibilities

Adjunct Professor for ***Introduction to Microcomputers*** and ***Information Technology Fundamentals*** courses for the Indianapolis Campus.

Ivy Tech Community College

2010 - 2017

A Post-Secondary Education College

Adjunct Professor, Indianapolis, IN

Responsibilities

Adjunct Professor for ***Introduction to Microcomputers, Health Information Management & Law, and Informatics*** courses for the Indianapolis Campuses and Lafayette Campus.

Adjunct Professor for ***Corporate College***, a division of IvyTech Community College focused on professional development and certifications where she taught ***Microsoft Office 2010 Specialist Courses*** through an ***IvyTech and Indiana Workforce Development WorkOne*** collaboration.

Key accomplishments include:

Consistently received above average scores on College Course Surveys

Crosstown Community Development Corporation

2009 - 2012

A Non-Profit Community Development Corporation

CORPORATE COUNSEL/CORPORATE SECRETARY, Indianapolis, IN

Responsibilities:

Handled all legal matters for Crosstown Community Development Corporation (“CCDC”). Assisted in protecting the legal interests of the CCDC and maintained its operations within the scope established by law. Provided hands-on legal counsel to all levels of executive staff. Managed operational activities of the corporation. Responsible for identifying and analyzing housing issues, drafting key legal documents, presenting clear recommendations, and assuring legal compliance. Served as principal liaison to the Board of Directors and its Committees. Ensured the efficient and effective performance of Board and Committee operations and administration. Maintained corporate governance documentation, including by-laws.

CA, Inc., Islandia NY

2005 - 2009

An IT Management Software firm

SENIOR CONTRACTS MANAGER, Indianapolis, IN

Responsibilities:

Oversaw procurement review functions, including determinations and findings required by law, software professional services requests for proposals. Assisted sales staff members in drafting and negotiating standard licensing documents. Reviewed and revised non-standard licensing provisions and non-standard professional service agreements. Reviewed, revised and negotiated non-standard professional service agreements and statements of work. Reviewed software evaluation agreements. Provided contract guidance and training to sales organization. Provided legal advice regarding all stages of the procurement process from cradle through to grave. Identified, researched and escalated complex legal and factual issues to senior attorneys and assisted senior attorneys in resolving the same. Negotiated legal provisions and pricing in licensing agreements. Reviewed and suggested revisions to non-standard non-disclosure agreements, IT Security Agreements and HIPPA Business Associate Addendums. Ensured aforementioned agreements were in compliance with company and federal regulatory policies, rules, regulations and guidelines.

OPERATIONS MANAGER, Indianapolis, IN

Responsibilities:

Tracked & monitored services forecasts and capacity planning coordinating efforts with resource management team. Managed and executed operational projects to achieve CA corporate objectives with national and global virtual teams consisting of key stakeholders. Coordinated resolution of assigned territory revenue reporting/missing revenue issues. Worked with collections and billings to resolve open issues for both client and services partners. Coordinated resolution of typical project processing issues. Served as the SAP subject matter expert for the assigned territory for those regions using SAP. Produced professional service agreements statistics and tracking by assigned territory. Helped build the knowledge base for the global solutions engineering team – including lessons learned, best practices, tools, and methods and learning events using SharePoint’s document repository as the enabling technology.

Key accomplishments include:

- Developed and delivered training curriculum to national contracts management team.
- Within six (6) months of hire date, participated on team which closed several multi-million dollar deals for major clients.

- Participated on team which pioneered development of policies and procedures around contract process re-engineering effort.
- Collaborated with executive management team including VP, IT Security to develop policy and procedures for the administration of IT Security Agreements and HIPPA Agreements for hospital, healthcare and university clients who maintained sensitive data.

Entara Technology Group, Cleveland, OH

2004 - 2005

A technology consulting firm.

MANAGER, Indianapolis, IN

Responsibilities:

Coordinated functional task teams for the Indiana Supreme Court (ISC) state-wide case management system (CMS) project. Developed policies and procedures to support the ISC CMS system. Prepared and negotiated technological software contractual provisions. Reviewed project contract, determined scope and developed change management process. Developed business test plans for user acceptance of new system. Ensured accounting system met Indiana State Board of Accounts rules, policies & procedures.

Key accomplishments include:

- Promoted to project team manager and oversaw all functional task teams' project timelines, risk assessment plans and change management strategies.
- Re-launched key project through effective communication of project attributes and secured buy-in from key judicial officers around the state for new system installation.

Steptoe & Johnson, Washington, DC

2002 - 2003

A law firm specializing in regulatory, litigation, and business solutions practices.

LAW CLERK & DOCKET SPECIALIST, Washington, DC

Responsibilities:

Oversaw deployment of Prolaw case management software system to remote US and international locations. Developed guidelines governing research & development of court procedures for various jurisdictions. Oversaw database, WAN setup and update of software rule sets. Established help desk services and procedures.

Key accomplishments include:

- Developed comprehensive training curricula and legal staff training program for both main office and remote locations to support system launch.
- Promoted to oversee and manage case coordination and scheduling for local counsel in various states nationwide as a result of successful implementation of Prolaw system.

The Curtis Publishing Company, Indianapolis, IN

2000 - 2001

A licensing agency responsible for the exclusive licensor of Norman Rockwell's artwork from The Saturday Evening Post and Country Gentlemen's magazines.

LAW CLERK & TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANT, Indianapolis, IN

Responsibilities:

Assisted staff attorney with tracking of copyright infringement violators, researched applicable infringement laws and prepared memoranda addressing infringements. Negotiated and drafted consulting, software development and copyright licensing agreements. Maintained and tracked client contract maintenance fees and renewal portfolios.

Key accomplishments include:

- Selected to spearhead development team to build in-house database using Visual Basic and Microsoft SQL; project completed on-schedule and met business plan objectives.
- Successfully scanned and catalogued 3000+ images and coordinated corresponding data in new database.

Resort Condominiums International, Indianapolis, IN

1997-2000

A travel & timeshare management company.

DATABASE ANALYST/INTERNAL CONSULTANT, Indianapolis, IN

Responsibilities:

Responsible for development of management reporting system that tracked telecom call statistics and provided real-time information via the company Intranet. Developed data backup, archive, and recovery strategies for ORACLE server that housed call center data. Reviewed and installed software applications to improve corporate efficiency.

Key accomplishments include:

- Developed in-house electronic scheduling managing system (SMS) used to schedule 1400+ local and international employees; system provided scheduling efficiencies and avoided \$100K purchase of off-the-shelf software.

EBC Computing Services, Indianapolis, IN

1995-1997

A technology consulting firm.

APPLICATION DEVELOPER, Indianapolis, IN

Responsibilities:

Developed customized software applications for corporate and non-profit clients. Served as client liaison; completed requirements analysis and communicated with development teams. Oversaw project management process and deliverables.

Key accomplishments include:

- Served as key developer for clinical trial results tracking system software for Eli Lilly and customer service index database for US Postal Service serving Indiana residents.

Education:

- Doctorate of Jurisprudence, Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law, Indianapolis, IN
- Bachelor of Science, Computer Science, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN

Bar Admissions: Indiana State Bar, Illinois State Bar, District of Columbia Bar

Hearing Board Member, Illinois Attorney Registration & Disciplinary Commission

General Counsel of Coalition of African American Leaders

Past Board Member IMANI Community Development Corporation