

Michael A. Becker of St. Louis is chosen as the 2023 Michael R. Roser Excellence in Bankruptcy Award Recipient

Since 1994, the Commercial Law Committee of the Missouri Bar, through a special selection subcommittee consisting of past recipients and attorneys representing different geographical areas throughout the state in a variety of practice sizes, each year presents the Roser award to an attorney who manifests the highest standard of excellence in bankruptcy practice, who contributes distinctively to the development and appreciation of bankruptcy law, and who has made an outstanding contribution to the field of bankruptcy practice or administration. The award is named in honor of the late Michael R. Roser, a prominent Kansas City bankruptcy lawyer.

Michael A. Becker has been chosen to receive the 2023 Michael R. Roser Excellence in Bankruptcy Award.

Michael is a 1987 graduate of St. Louis University School of Law. His first foray into bankruptcy law was on Christmas Eve 1987 when he was commissioned to deliver 52 boxes containing the Apex Oil bankruptcy filing to the Clerk of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Missouri. Since then, he has represented various individuals and entities, including bankruptcy trustees, in every aspect of Chapter 7, 11 and 13 and served as receiver in numerous state court proceedings. To quote one of the nominating papers, "he has represented a wide variety of parties from institutional clients in complex Chapter 11 cases seeking to save a company, to individuals in Chapter 13 cases seeking to save a family home."

His service to the bankruptcy system goes beyond representation of individual parties in bankruptcy proceedings. Michael has made substantial commitments to pro bono legal services, winning awards for such service, as well as to the mentorship of law students studying bankruptcy law. He was a member of a committee that created a pilot program for pro bono bankruptcy services in the Eastern District of Missouri and himself represented numerous individuals pro bono before the bankruptcy court. He has also devoted substantial time to preparing the coming generation of bankruptcy attorneys by spearheading a bankruptcy law clinic at St. Louis University overseeing 2Ls and 3Ls as student attorneys representing indigent clients before the bankruptcy court. To quote another of the nominating papers, "this initiative not only provided much-needed legal representation to those who could not afford it, but also provided these law students with invaluable practical experience."

The award will be presented at the Midwestern Bankruptcy Institute in Kansas City, Missouri, on October 20, 2023.