

MICHAEL "MIKE" E. ZELLER

Head of Global Services, Co-head of ESOP Transactions

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As head of the Global Services group, Mike Zeller provides his corporate transactional clients the accessibility, responsiveness, knowledge, and understanding of in-house counsel, coupled with the deep, full spectrum of the firm's legal resources and cost- efficiencies.

Mike gives his regional, national and international clients passionate, straightforward counsel in general corporate representation, mergers and acquisitions, franchising, inbound and outbound international trade. He represents companies both as franchisors and franchisees. A significant portion of Mike's practice involves the implementation of Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs) and transactions involving ESOP companies. In this regard, Mike represents both corporations and institutional trustees.

He focuses on instilling confidence in his clients by:

- Handling their requests with all possible attention and high professionalism.
- Understanding their goals fully.
- Using realistic and timely communication.
- Providing options that best accomplish their desired outcomes.

From 1997 to 2007, Mike served as local counsel to CIT Small Business Lending Corporation. He also represents clients as borrowers in connection with major corporate acquisitions, reorganizations, plant expansions and increased working-capital needs.

Fluent in German and formerly associated with DROSTE, a prominent Hamburg, Germany, law firm, he assists foreign clients, with a large focus on German and German-speaking companies, in establishing business relations or subsidiaries in the United States. Mike advises United States-based clients on the development of trading opportunities abroad, joint

Capabilities

Corporate Governance & Shareholder Relations
ESOP Transactions
German Desk
Global Services
Immigration
Mergers & Acquisitions

Education

LL.M., University of Hamburg, 1994, magna cum laude
J.D., Temple University, 1992
B.A., Union College, 1989, Modern Languages

Admissions

North Carolina, 1996
New York, 1993

Other Areas of Law

International
Corporate
Mergers and Acquisitions
Franchising
Business Planning

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venture agreements, distributor and agency agreements, sales representative agreements, licensing agreements, and disputes with the U.S. Customs Service.

ESOP Transactions
Small Business Lending

Mike's client services include:

- Asset acquisitions and divestitures
- Capitalization transactions
- Corporate governance
- Employee stock ownership plans
- Entity formation/governance
- Franchising
- General corporate counsel
- International business/trade
- Joint ventures and strategic alliances
- Leveraged buyouts
- Licensing, distribution and general contract matters
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Preferred and common stock placements
- Private equity, venture capital
- Shareholder agreements
- Stock agreements
- Stock option plans and restricted stock agreements

Notable

- Listed in International WHO's WHO of Professionals 2011-2012
- Marquis' *Who's Who in American Law*, *Who's Who in the Southeast*, and *Who's Who in America*, 2003-2008
- AV peer review rated in Martindale-Hubbell legal directory
- Fluent in German (Bio), versed in Spanish
- Seminar lecturer on corporate, ESOP and international law issues
- 5.0 Client Rating
- Pro Bono general counsel to Charlotte Mothers of Multiples
- Pro Bono general counsel to Charlotte Community School for Girls 2010-2011

MICHAEL "MIKE" E. ZELLER

- Charlotte Housing Authority, pro bono Informal Hearing Officer 2012- present
- Active volunteer attorney, representing children in contested custody cases and women seeking domestic-violence protective orders
- Volunteer Attorney of the Year, Mecklenburg County Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program in 1998 and 2003 for exemplary service to Council for Children's Rights
- Guardian ad litem
- Director, Council for Children's Rights, 2004-2007
- Director & Secretary, The German Language and Culture Foundation, 2011- present
- Contact Partner, Globalaw
- Contributing author, *Structuring International M&A Deals: Leading Lawyers on Managing Mergers & Acquisitions in a Global Environment*, Aspatore Books' *Inside the Mind* series

Affiliations

- American Bar Association
- ESOP Association, Member of Legislative and Regulatory Advisory Committee
- Gewerblicher Rechtsschutz und Urheberrecht Verband
- Mecklenburg County Bar
- National Center for Employee Ownership
- North Carolina Bar Association