

Mr. Young goes to the U.N. General Assembly

Southfield attorney helps tackle U.S. problems with lawyer skill set

By Natalie Lombardo

Southfield attorney Rodger D. Young is digging deep into the country's most urgent concerns.

President George W. Bush has appointed the commercial litigator as one of five U.S. delegates to the United Nations General Assembly.

Taking a mandatory resignation from his firm, Young will serve in Washington until Dec. 23. He joins former New York Gov. George Pataki, Congressmen Ted Poe, a Texas Republican, and Bill Delahunt, a Massachusetts Democrat; as well as Kelly Knight, a Republican business leader and fund-raiser from Kentucky.

Young has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for Republican causes, but says he was chosen because of his extensive experience in dispute resolution and ability to explain complex positions to large groups.

"This new position calls upon the same skills used everyday in my law practice," Young said. "Legal training is superb preparation for it. There's a lot of negotiation, oral presentation and persuasion involved."

The General Assembly is the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative body of the United Nations. It also plays a substantial role in the process of standard-setting and international law codification.

Each of the 192 nations that are members has one vote in the assembly.

Young is responsible for meeting with delegates from other countries and expressing U.S. positions, to forge a commonality of interests on critical issues.

The assembly is tackling international security, economics and governance, such as the third round of sanctions against Iraq, human rights violations in Darfur, global warming and tariff trade matters.

"I'm passionate about anything where the interests of the United States are in danger," Young said.

For the 2000 and 2004 campaigns, Young was a "Bush Pioneer," which means he helped raise at least \$100,000.

In the last decade, he noted, Young has contributed more than \$200,000, mainly to Republican candidates. He backs Bush because he likes the "healthy economy" and the way terrorism is being handled.

When his term is up, Young will return as managing partner to the firm he helped found, Young & Susser PC.

A graduate of the University of Minnesota Law School, the Montana native said, "Participation in public service is a joy that all attorneys should seek to involve themselves in."

If you would like to comment on this story, please contact Natalie Lombardo at (248) 865-3103 or natalie.lombardo@mi.lawyersweekly.com.

In 2006, Young received several recognitions including being listed in: *The Best Lawyers in America*, "Michigan Super Lawyers," *The Detroit News*' "Top 100 Litigators in Michigan," and Chambers USA's "Best Commercial Litigators in America." He's co-author of the West Group's book, *Michigan Civil Trials and Evidence*.