

Focus On An FBA Member

Rodger D. Young

U.S. Delegate to the United Nations General Assembly

A new feature of the Newsletter is the periodic profiling of a FBA member. This is the second of such profiles.

By Michael J. Riordan*

Two great loves are the driving forces behind long-time FBA member Rodger D. Young's life and career – his love of the United States of America and his love of the law. Recognizing these passions, President George W. Bush nominated Young in September to be a U.S. Delegate to the United Nations General Assembly. The Senate quickly and unanimously confirmed Young's nomination on October 26, 2007.

Along with Young, President Bush appointed former New York Governor George Pataki and Kentucky businesswoman Kelly Knight as delegates. Young, a founding partner of the commercial and complex litigation Law Firm of Young & Susser, is "absolutely elated" that the President would tap him to serve in such a prestigious and important foreign policy post.

Young will serve as a U.S. Delegate to the U.N.'s 62nd General Assembly through May 2008, and will work at the direction of the U.S. State Department and Zalmay Khalilzad, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. Since reporting for duty, Young has been assigned to the U.N.'s Legal Committee where he will lead the State Department's legal team in formulating and implementing an entirely new administrative law system for the United Nations and its 50,000 employees and contractors. This is a "challenging opportunity" said Young. "While the United States is greatly admired by the rest of the world, the diplomatic challenges facing us are complex and sensitive." As a lawyer and litigator, he said, "I am trained to announce and hold my client's position in a legal dispute. Now, at the U.N., ambiguity and consensus rule rather than the rule of law." Young said "this is taking some adjustment."

No one is better suited for the challenges that being a



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U.N. Delegate offer than Rodger Young, a native of Montana, and an honors graduate of the University of Montana and the University of Minnesota School of Law. He has extensive experience in complex commercial litigation including antitrust, high technology, telecommunications, trade secret, automotive, shareholder/partner disputes, and

construction, where he has won forty-two of forty-five jury trials in Federal and State courts. One of his losses was reversed and another was a \$30,000 verdict where Mr. Young's opponent had demanded \$300,000.

Young has received numerous recognitions for his outstanding achievements as a lawyer. He is a member of the Michigan Bar Foundation, an inductee of the American College of Trial Lawyers and he was selected as one of the "Best Lawyers in America." In addition, he was chosen as one of Chambers USA "American Leading Lawyers for Business." Along with being active in the FBA, Young is a member of the State Bar of Michigan, the Oakland County Bar Association, and the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association. He also is

admitted to the United States Supreme Court, U.S. Court of Appeals for the First, Second, Sixth and Ninth Circuits, and numerous District Courts throughout the United States.

Young's distinguished record of public service also includes gubernatorial appointments to the Michigan Environmental Review Board, an agency charged with reviewing all matters of environmental significance in the State, and to the Michigan Transportation Commission, where he served as the youngest commissioner in its history and where he eventually became Vice-Chair of the Commission. The Michigan Supreme Court also appointed Young to the State Bar's Board of Commissioners. Additionally, in 2000 and 2004, he was the Chair of the Congressional review committee for applicants for Presidential appointments to the 6th Circuit, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District and for the position of U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District.

U.S. Delegate Young said that his first days on the job have been very educational. "Over 50 million people in the world depend on the U.N. for sustenance and safety and there are over 100,000, U.N. peacekeepers deployed throughout the world in various trouble spots." While the U.N. is replete with good works he finds it to "lack

transparency and that its post-program auditing program needs to be improved greatly.” Young will be working for improvements in both of those areas.

While he will miss his law practice in Southfield, he is excited about being able to live and work full-time in New York for the coming months. “I have an apartment in Manhattan at 48th Street and 1st Avenue, which is kitty corner to the U.N. Building where I will be spending most of my time. I think I have the shortest work commute in New York City and I will be using all of my time advancing the United States’ objectives at the U.N.” Young said he “could not be more pleased than to have this great opportunity to serve his Country and the law.” Likewise, the FBA could not be more pleased than to call Rodger Young one of its own.

**Michael J. Riordan is an Assistant United States Attorney and serves as Chapter Program Chair.*



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