

law firm profile:

hickey & evans



Located in the heart of Cheyenne, the fourth floor of the Majestic Building was a hub for great legal minds from the 1920s to the early 1980s. “Many great legal minds went through there,” remarks managing partner of Hickey & Evans, LLP, David (“Dave”) F. Evans (J.D. ’78). In the 1920s, the University of Wyoming College of Law produced about two to four graduates a year. In the 1930s the class sizes increased dramatically with UW Law producing between six and twelve new attorneys each year. Many of these attorneys ended up working on the fourth floor of the Majestic Building. One was C. R. Ellery, considered the founder of the Cheyenne law firm Hickey & Evans, LLP.

Today, the firm is just as impressive. Located in the Bank of the West building on the corner of Carey and 18th Street, Hickey & Evans has offices on the 6th and 7th floors. Hickey & Evans prides itself in being a true Wyoming firm representing both individuals and corporations. All of the partners and associates are Wyoming law graduates. A brief background of the attorneys that make up this distinctive law firm:

Dave is a fourth generation Wyomingite. He joined the firm straight out of law school and has been committed to the practice ever since.

Dave knows the firm’s history well, and reminiscing, proudly shows a black and white photograph of C. R. Ellery framed and hung in the firm’s sixth floor conference room. Dave is married to Becky, and the two have three children. He is active in the Cheyenne community serving on a number of non-profit boards and as a coach for youth soccer and basketball for many years. He also enjoys hunting, fishing, golf and traveling with Becky.

Roger Fransen (J.D. ’83), who is of counsel joined Hickey & Evans in 1999. Originally from South Dakota, he has lived and practiced law in Cheyenne for 25 years and has been with Hickey & Evans for more than 17 years. Previously, he served as Director of the Wyoming Office of Administrative Hearings, served on Governor Michael Sullivan’s Staff, and was a Senior Assistant Attorney General for the State of Wyoming. Roger and his wife Bonnie enjoy spending time with their children and grandchildren. He enjoys upland bird hunting and fly fishing.

Paul J. Hickey (J.D. '75), Chairman of the Law Dean's Advisory Board and past President of the Wyoming State Bar, is the son of J. J. "Joe" Hickey (J.D. '34), a former partner in the firm. Paul related that after graduating, "Dad returned to Rawlins at the height of the Great Depression. It was his education at UW that gave him the opportunity to succeed in the practice of law and public service." Joe Hickey was a talented trial lawyer who served the State as U.S. Attorney, Governor, U.S. Senator and Judge of the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals at the time of his untimely death in 1970. Paul Hickey's mother, Win, served on the Board of Trustees of the University, was President of the UW Foundation Board, and was a passionate advocate for the University as a member of the Wyoming State Senate. In 1990, UW awarded Win an Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree.

Paul continues his father's legacy, and advises those entering the practice of law to stay committed to the profession in order to help people and give back to your community. The faculty of the College of Law selected Paul to become the 2009 Honorary member of the Order of the Coif. Paul's son Patrick just completed his J.D. at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law and is clerking for Judge Daniel J. Kaup, 8th Judicial District, Colorado. Paul's daughter Mary is a teacher in Chicago. She received her Master's Degree in Education from the University of Colorado. Paul is married to Jeanne who is also a UW alum—she received her B.A. in 1974 and her M.B.A. in 1985 from UW. Jeanne

serves on the National Advisory Board for the Art Museum.

Paul says he is honored to serve as chairman of the law dean's advisory board. "It gives me the opportunity to give back to the college that has had an impact on my life."

John A. Coppede (J.D. '87), originally from New York, is a long time Wyoming resident. Following law school, he clerked for federal district court Judge Alan B. Johnson. He is a partner in the firm and has been with Hickey & Evans for three years. Prior to coming to the firm he served as special counsel for Rothgerber, Johnson & Lyons.

John M. Walker (J.D. '84) joined Hickey & Evans upon graduation from law school. He is married and has seven children and fifteen grandchildren. He enjoys Wyoming's rugged outdoors and is an avid hunter, fisherman and photographer. He wrote two novels, *Pioneer Parables* and *Varmint Hunter*.

Richard D. Bush (J.D. '89) is a partner at the firm who clerked for the Wyoming Supreme Court upon graduation from law school. He joined Hickey & Evans in 1990.

All of the law firm's associates are second-career attorneys, lending maturity and added knowledge to their respective areas of expertise.

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Of interest: Five former Hickey & Evans attorneys served both as Wyoming Attorneys General and on the Wyoming Supreme Court. **Norman B. ("Tiny") Gray** was a Wyoming Attorney General who went on to serve on the Wyoming Supreme Court from January 1963 to December 1971; he was Chief Justice from January 1969 through December 1970. **Archie G. ("Arch") McClintock** (J.D. '35) was on the Wyoming Supreme Court from July 1973 to March 1981 and later went on to be the Attorney General (of historic note: McClintock was the only AG appointed after having served on the Court). **Harry S. Harnsberger, Jr.** (J.D. '61) was appointed to the Wyoming Supreme Court in March 1953 and served until January 1969; he was Chief Justice from January 1967 to December 1968. **John Rooney** was Attorney General and appointed to the Wyoming Supreme Court from January 1979 to November 1985. He was Chief Justice from January 1983 to December 1984. **John Raper** (J.D. '36) was Attorney General and later appointed to the Wyoming Supreme Court in December 1974. His term went through June 1983 and he served as Chief Justice from January 1979 to December 1980. Justice Raper was also a district court judge from December 1966 through December 1974.

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One partner who appreciates the flexibility offered by the firm is **O’Kelley (“Kelley”) H. Pearson** (J.D. ’07), who joined Hickey & Evans out of law school. Kelley is also a second-career attorney, with a background in education, international studies, and French.

During law school Kelley served as managing editor of the Wyoming Law Review, graduated with honors, and earned membership in the Order of the Coif. She is married to Mark Pearson and they have two children. The family lives in Laramie, but owns and operates an outfitting business in Pinedale during the summer months. Kelley remarked, “The firm approached me with the option that I work from Pinedale during the summer. It was nice not having to make a choice between work and family. The partners said, ‘We’ll support you,’ and they meant it.”

As far as the work goes, the firm is doing great things. The firm represents clients in the fast-growing area of wind energy law. Kelley remarks,

“It is exciting to navigate new ground. There is no law in this area so we work on identifying the issues and presenting them in an understandable way—it is a fantastic opportunity to work in a growing field of law.”

The firm recently won a \$3.5 million dollar judgment for individual clients in a personal injury case against the state of Nebraska. The case involved improper signage at an intersection that resulted in two separate accidents. In January 2009, the Nebraska legislature appropriated funds for the judgment.

Another landmark case for the firm, in cooperation with a team of other Wyoming law firms, was in the school funding case, *Campbell County School District v. Wyoming*.

Words that sum up the firm are history, integrity, community, family-oriented, and professionalism. From the great minds that gathered in the Majestic Building in the 1920s, a law firm was born that truly cares about its clientele, its peers, and the Wyoming community. “And we are not the only ones,” remarks Dave Evans. “You will find that most Wyoming lawyers give back to their communities and have a level of professionalism that may not always be found in a larger bar.” The University of Wyoming College of Law is proud to have alumni and friends who truly care and are such an integral part of the Wyoming legal community.